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Arab-Israeli Talks

Clinton Invites 'Arafat, Rabin to 'Expanded' Summit

TA2712125393 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 27 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] Diplomatic sources have disclosed to AL-MANAR that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin have received messages from U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The two messages were conveyed to the Palestinian and Israeli leaders by the U.S. ambassadors in Tunis and Tel Aviv. These sources say that Clinton's messages deal with the "stalled" talks between Israel and the PLO and seek to promote the talks. The messages also contain an invitation to 'Arafat and Rabin to visit Washington in the middle of February to participate in a summit similar to Camp David but in an expanded form that may also include King Husayn, President Hafiz al-Asad, and the Lebanese president.

The messages contain proposals for bridging the gap between Israel and the PLO. President 'Arafat briefed the Palestinian leadership on Clinton's message during a meeting held at the end of last week in the Tunisian capital.

Peres, Delegation Arrive in Cairo 27 Dec

NC2712142893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1415 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and his accompanying delegation arrived in Cairo this afternoon to attend the meetings of the Palestinian-Israeli Liaison Committee scheduled to be held later today.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres expressed hope that a solution to all the pending issues between the Palestinians and Israelis will be reached. He said: If we did not hope to achieve a solution then we would not have sought negotiations. He noted that the most important problem is the "insistence on land in return for peace," but we will work to find a solution that is satisfactory to all the parties. He added: We are in Cairo now to learn about the Palestinian proposals and the possibility of achieving them with all honesty and sincerity. He expressed hope that this would be achieved with the help of officials in Egyptian and by becoming acquainted with these officials' views on the two parties' proposals.

Peres said he hoped an agreement could be reached that would satisfy public opinion in the occupied territories and Israel. He said that he did not want to give anymore details about the talks and what they could lead to. He noted that he will meet with senior Egyptian officials while he is in Cairo. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Confers With Labor Party Leader Zvili

TA2612114393 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Dec 93 p A4

[Report by party affairs correspondent Yerah Tal]

[Text] In a meeting Friday [24 December] night in Tunis with Labor Party Secretary General Nisim Zvili, PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat enumerated his demands concerning the negotiations on the establishment of autonomy in Gaza and Jericho.

'Arafat demands that the border crossings be controlled by a multinational force in conjunction with Palestinian and Israeli troops; that the settlements of Netzarim, Kfar Darom, and Dugit be relocated from the Gaza Strip into the Qatif Bloc; that the security zone set by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] in the Qatif Bloc be reduced from 41 to 27 square km; and that the autonomous area in Jericho extend to the Dead Sea.

Zvili, who was in Tunis as a guest of the government, yesterday wrapped up a five-day visit during which he held three rounds of talks with 'Arafat and his aides. The last session took place Friday night.

Apparently in coordination with Rabin and Peres, Zvili proposed to 'Arafat the setting up of four separate check points at the border crossings. The first, which would only process people entering the autonomous areas in Gaza and Jericho, would be controlled by the Palestinians and would include Israeli observers.

The second station, which would process people entering other areas in the West Bank, would be controlled by Israel and include Palestinian observers. The third station, which would process people holding foreign passports, mainly tourists, would be controlled by a multinational force and include Israeli and Palestinian troops. A fourth station would check Israelis and would be controlled exclusively by Israel.

As noted before, 'Arafat insisted on his demand that a multinational force participate in the control of the border crossings in conjunction with Palestinian and Israeli troops.

Foreign Minister Peres relayed a new proposal through Zvili, whereby the area between the Dead Sea and the autonomy would be earmarked for industrial-tourism development by both Israel and the Palestinians. In exchange for a Palestinian concession on this issue, Israel would agree to include al-Nabi Musa—which does not contain any settlements—in Jericho's autonomous area. Zvili got the impression that 'Arafat tends to accept this compromise.

On the issue of Gaza, 'Arafat contended that three settlements—Netzarim, Kfar Darom, and Dugit, which were built near the refugee camps in the heart of the autonomous area earmarked for Gaza—must be relocated to the Qatif Bloc. He claimed that maintaining the security of these settlements would be a tough call as long

as they remain in their present location. Nevertheless, Zvili believes that 'Arafat will agree to drop this demand.

'Arafat also demanded that the security zone set by the IDF along roadsides and around settlements in the Qatif Bloc be reduced from 41 to 27 square km. 'Arafat said it was inconceivable that almost 1 million Palestinians be crowded into a narrow area, while 3,000 Jews reside on an area of almost 300 square km.

Zvili also conferred with top Tunisian Government officials during his visit. He noted that real progress had been made in relations between Israel and Tunis, and that he believes Tunis will establish diplomatic relations with Israel, perhaps even before Morocco.

'Abd-Rabbuh: No Progress in Paris, Oslo Talks

NC2312190493 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] To shed some light on the Palestinian-Israeli talks held in Versailles amid a media blackout, we telephoned Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, chief of the PLO Information Department and head of the Palestinian delegation to the talks, this evening [screen caption says he is in Tunis]. In his first statement after the two rounds of talks in Oslo and Versailles, he told MBC that there was no progress in the talks.

[Begin recording] ['Abd-Rabbuh] The main topics of discussion in Paris and earlier in Oslo are, regrettably, still unresolved. We believe that there are major obstacles because of Israel's failure to abide by the essence of the agreement. There are problems related to the crossing points, others to the size of the Jericho region, and others to the situation and size of the Israeli settlements in Gaza.

[MBC anchorman Antoine 'Awn] Yitshaq Rabin expressed readiness to expand the area of Jericho, but your delegation did not welcome this. Why?

['Abd-Rabbuh] The issue is not expanding the area of Jericho a few km. The issue is that withdrawal from the region of Jericho must be real and involve an area that we estimate to be close to the size the administrative border of the region as set in the past. The issue of withdrawal is a basic one for us. When we insist on holding precise negotiations over Jericho it is because the main issue, the main point of dispute, and indeed the essence of the conflict is the withdrawal of the occupation from Palestinian territory.

['Awn] Mr. 'Abd-Rabbuh, if the talks continue to move in a vicious circle even after the Cairo talks, what will your alternative be?

['Abd-Rabbuh] If the Israelis fail to come to Cairo with new proposals and ideas, this will be a serious signal concerning the implementation of the agreement and its first part: withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho. [end recording]

Terms Cairo Talks 'Last Chance'

JN2512175393 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Brother Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, member of the PLO Executive Committee, has said some progress was made in the Israeli position on the crossings. He added, however, that the Israelis should go further by recognizing Palestinian authority, which requires raising the Palestinian flag over border points.

In press statements published in Tunis, brother Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh added that there will be full and direct Palestinian supervision of the Palestinians' entry into Gaza and Jericho. He said there will be coordination with the Israelis regarding the rest of Palestinians.

He added that the next round of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations in Cairo is the last chance to reach agreement.

Sha'th on Paris Talks, 'Arafat-Rabin Summit

JN2312121493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1030 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Nabil Sha'th, member of the Palestinian delegation to talks with Israelis, in Versailles, by Sa'id Mu'addi and Ziyad Halabi in the studio; carried within "With the Midday Events"—live]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, member of the Palestinian delegation, good evening.

[Sha'th] Good evening.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil, we have finally managed to contact you in Versailles, where the Israeli and Palestinian delegations are engaged in intensive meetings. What is the outcome of these meetings?

[Sha'th] We continued negotiations over the basic issues that are still causing the principal problems, which led us to this kind of negotiations. These issues concern borders, crossing points, settlements, and the size of Jericho area. The only thing I can say now is that negotiations are continuing.

[Halabi] Dr. Nabil, Does the Palestinian delegation accept in principle the proposals and ideas presented by the Israeli delegation, or do they require a political decision from the leadership?

[Sha'th] Israeli and Palestinian proposals were presented. Now, both parties are engaged in deliberations in an attempt to find common ground and solutions acceptable to both parties. These decisions, however, still need further talks.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil, can one say that progress was achieved on the standing issues between the two parties that block the start of the implementation of the joint Declaration of Principles, or the Gaza-Jericho First agreement?

[Sha'th] I can say that negotiations are continuing. This shows that both parties feel that there is still a possibility for reaching an agreement. However, the talks will be adjourned until Monday [27 December]. When they continue they will focus on these same issues, as well as other issues, such as the transfer of civilian powers.

[Halabi] The principal issue is that of control over crossing points in Gaza and Jericho. Is there any proposals for compromise solutions to settle this question?

[Sha'th] I cannot say that progress was achieved until the two parties agree on the proposed formulas. This has yet to be achieved. The talks have not ceased, nor were they suspended, and this is a positive sign, of course. However, I cannot say that we have reached a solution yet.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil, there is a proposal for a compromise over the size of the self-rule area in Jericho, namely, and area of 100 km. Is this proposal acceptable to the Palestinian party?

[Sha'th] We have not seen such proposals yet. We still believe there is a need for a solution in which the size of the area is as close as possible to the size of the Jericho area under Jordanian rule. Having said that, I believe that we and the Israelis are still discussing this issue and have not yet reached an agreement.

[Halabi] In light of the outcome of the Oslo and Versailles talks, should we expect a meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in the near future?

[Sha'th] I believe the summit will take place as soon as the current meetings reach a point of progress that would improve the chances of success for the summit meeting. Suspending the summit meetings is aimed at reaching some kind of progress that would enable the two leaders to meet again and complete this initial agreement with a final one.

[Halabi] When will such progress be achieved?

[Sha'th] It is not a matter of time; but one of political wills. I believe that once an agreement is reached, such a meeting can be held as soon as possible. Therefore, it is difficult for me now to predict the date before we reach such an agreement. I believe that the meeting on Monday will be an important one in terms of setting the date for the summit meeting.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, member of the Palestinian delegation, thank you very much.

[Sha'th] Thank you.

Palestinian Official: 'Full Partners' at Crossings

JN2612155693 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Dec 93 pp 1, 22

[By Tawfiq al-'Abid]

[Text] They wanted us to be eyewitnesses who did not witness anything, but at last they agreed that the Palestinians are full partners at the crossing points. This was what a ranking Palestinian official told AL-DUSTUR last night following the conclusion of a round of negotiations in Paris.

He said: The Israeli position, which considered control of crossings part of the external security for which the Israeli Army is responsible, has changed. Israel accepted the effective partnership of the Palestinians while it will maintain veiled control on those entering the self-rule area.

He added: It has been agreed that Israel will not interfere in the affairs of the population in Gaza and the Jericho area, and that full control on those entering or leaving will be borne by specialized Palestinian forces.

The Palestinian official went on to say: The Israelis tried to circumvent the Palestinian position, which insists on controlling the crossing points and bridges, by proposing two checkpoints—the first Palestinian and the second Israeli. They argued that their proposal was aimed at maintaining external security and preventing smuggling. They also demanded that the Palestinian side be committed to present lists of those who enter the occupied territories to the Israeli side.

Answering a question, he said: As I said, the Israelis accepted the partnership of the Palestinian side, therefore, the crossings will be run by the Palestinians in terms of the stamps that are issued and the flags that will be hoisted on the crossings and police and customs posts, but the technological issues regarding external security have not been resolved yet.

He said: As for the Israeli position on the area of Jericho, there is no essential change. According to the Israeli position Jericho is no more than 100 square km, from al-'Alami project, to al-'Awja, and to the refugee camps. The Palestinian side rejected this. But he said: There is flexibility in the Israeli side concerning the area of Jericho as the Versailles negotiations have shown, but the problem is in extending the Jericho area to the Dead Sea or the Jordan River.

He added: The Israelis say that they want to prevent our geographical contacts with our brothers in Jordan, whether through sea or river, under the pretext of external security, but we insist that the Jericho area should include an area that secures our direct contact with Jordan, and this contact should not be through the Israelis.

He told AL-DUSTUR: The Cairo negotiations that will be held tomorrow will not deal with the Palestinian role on the crossings, but how to restrict the Israeli role to external security and how to keep this role unseen.

He concluded by saying: The next negotiations will deal with the most delicate details and the results of these negotiations may open the way for the meeting between

Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, or delaying that meeting for another week.

'Compromise' Reached on Border Crossings Detailed

JN2712010093 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 27 Dec 93 p 1

[Text] Tunis, AL-ASWAQ—An informed Palestinian source has said the Palestinian and Israeli sides have reached a compromise for the problem of the crossings and traffic to and from the self-rule region and the West Bank.

The source said the new agreement stipulates that there should be four points (windows) at the border post. The first window, which will receive arrivals to Gaza and Jericho, will be under full Palestinian control. The second, which will receive Israelis and foreigners visiting Israel, will be under full Israeli control. The third, which will receive West Bank residents heading home, will have one Palestinian and one Israeli employee. The fourth, designed to receive Arab and foreign visitors to the region, will also be under joint Palestinian-Israeli control.

The source affirmed that today's talks in Cairo will settle the remaining differences between the two parties, especially with regard to control of the borderline and an electronic gate. Each party had demanded unilateral control.

The source expected the two parties to agree on a formula for joint control of the border and the gate, ruling out international participation, even if symbolic.

Israel had demanded that it be allowed to check the passports of arrivals to the self-rule region. Palestinians, however, strongly rejected this demand, and Israel, under U.S. pressure, reversed its position.

Shuhaq, PLO Officials View Fugitives, Deportees

TA2612122293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Major General Amnon Shuhaq and a representative of the Prime Minister's Office met at noon today in Rome with Jibril al-Rajub and Muhammad Dahlan to discuss Palestinian demands to stop hunting down Fatah fugitives who perpetrated terror attacks and to allow the return of Fatah members deported during the intifadah in order to reduce violence and uphold calm.

Our correspondent Moti Amir points out that Jibril al-Rajub, who was the PLO official in charge of the West Bank, was removed from this job and all his powers were transferred to Abu-Mahir Ghunaym. One of the deportees the Palestinians demand allowing back is Akram Haniyah, an aide to 'Arafat who was deported at the beginning of the intifadah.

Progress in Security Cooperation Reported

TA2712055393 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 27 Dec 93 p A1

[Report by Eytan Rabin, Gay Bekhor, and Aluf Ben]

[Excerpt] Significant progress has been made in the last few weeks on the security track of the talks between Israel and the PLO. The talks between Israeli defense establishment officials and Palestinian leaders in charge of security affairs were held intermittently in various European countries.

In one meeting, in Geneva, Switzerland, the Israeli officials discussed issues related to security cooperation with Muhammad Dahlan and other PLO members.

According to reliable sources, although there is as yet no written agreement, there is an agreement in principle on modes of operation and cooperation on the local level. The main goal of both sides is to attain cooperation in the struggle against the opponents of the peace process, including Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] fugitives.

The principles of this cooperation, including the rank of the men in charge in the field, were agreed upon in the talks.

According to these sources, there will be close cooperation between Israel and the PLO on the exchange of information about security issues.

Both sides were given broad latitude to conduct the discussions, with the Israeli delegates reporting any progress to Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister and defense minister, and the Palestinians reporting to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

According to the sources, although significant progress has been made on the security track of the talks, this is affected by the contacts on the other tracks. The sources further believe it will be impossible to implement the security agreement as long as the document of principles has not been signed. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Envoy Comments on Differences With Israel

NC2312210293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2000 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—Sa'id Kamal, Palestinian ambassador in Cairo, has stressed that the Palestine issue will remain the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict as long as the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles is not implemented. Kamal warned that any delay in reaching an agreement on the Gaza-Jericho plan will weaken the morale of the Palestinian negotiators.

In an interview with Egyptian television broadcast this evening, the Palestinian ambassador welcomed any Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied in

1967, adding that such a withdrawal would be a gain for the Arab cause and would not affect the Declaration of Principles.

On the difficulties of implementing the Declaration of Principles, Kamal pointed out that there is some confusion in explaining the matter to the media. He added: Regarding Jerusalem, we say that Jerusalem will ultimately be the capital of the state of Palestine, while Israel says that Jerusalem will remain unified under its supervision. Therefore, he added, we are talking about the implementation, from now until the end of this century, of Resolution 242, which means withdrawal from Arab Jerusalem, which was occupied in 1967.

On the Palestinian-Israeli differences over the implementation of the Declaration of Principles, Kamal said that these differences, which are the subject of the current negotiations between the two sides, deal with the question of settlements in the occupied territories and the issue of the crossing points. He noted that concerning the settlements, the differences revolve around the number of settlements in Gaza as well as the question of security there. He pointed out that Palestine [as received] accepts Israel's security supervision in coordination with the PLO.

Regarding the crossing points, Kamal noted that the Palestinians consider this issue a domestic one, while the Israelis view it as one related to external security. He noted that under the Israeli-Palestinian agreement, external security is Israel's responsibility during the interim period.

On the Palestinian-Israeli differences over the area of Jericho, Kamal pointed out that the Palestinian side bases its views on the pre-1967 status. He noted that, according to Jordanian law, Jericho's area is 340 square km, while the Israelis say that its area is limited to the city itself, not the whole Jericho region. Kamal stressed that Egypt is holding contacts with the Israelis on this subject.

On the travel abroad of individuals from the Palestinian territories under self-rule, Kamal noted that Egyptian officials had told him that there is a plan to build an airport between Sinai and Rafah. The Palestinians also plan to build an airport between Jericho and Jordan, thus allowing people to travel to Amman Airport and from there to Cairo Airport, he added.

Inter-Arab Affairs

'Abd-al-Majid Sends Message to U.S. Congress

NC2412080293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0640 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Washington, 24 Dec (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has sent a letter to the U.S. Congress stressing that the Arab boycott of Israel will remain in place as long as the Israeli occupation of Arab territories continues.

In his letter, 'Abd-al-Majid said the lifting of the boycott will take place only after the Israeli forces withdraw from the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and southern Lebanon and only after the UN resolutions are fully implemented, especially UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 625.

Dr. 'Abdallah 'Izzat Subayh, head of the Arab League mission in Washington, said 'Abd-al-Majid's letter was in response to a letter he received in November. The letter, signed by 77 senators—47 Democrats and 30 Republicans—demanded that the Arab boycott of Israel be lifted in light of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement signed in September. [passage omitted]

Turkey's Cetin Meets With Arab League Chief

NC2612124493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1155 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 26 Dec (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid today received Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin, who is currently visiting Cairo. After the meeting, Cetin said that he and 'Abd-al-Majid discussed the problems facing the Islamic world, particularly Bosnia-Herzegovina, Azerbaijan, and the other Balkan states. They also reviewed the peace process in the Middle East. Cetin praised the close ties between Turkey and the Arab countries, noting that there is a common history and culture between them.

Responding to a question on the water issue, Cetin said that Syria and Iraq are neighboring countries and we do not want to harm our neighbors. He pointed out that there is nothing to cause concern regarding water at present, noting that a dialogue is under way between Turkey and its neighbors on this issue.

'Abd-al-Majid described his meeting with Cetin as "useful and fruitful," noting that this is the first visit to the Arab League by a Turkish minister. He stressed that ties between Turkey and the Arab world are firm and are characterized by understanding and cooperation. He noted that he discussed with Cetin the water issue and stressed that both sides are interested in finding a solution to this issue, which concerns Syria, Iraq, and Turkey in connection with the good-neighborly relations among the three countries. He said that he will continue his contacts with Turkey on all issues that concern Arab-Turkish ties. He said that he has received an invitation to visit Turkey, noting that he accepted the invitation and its date will be set later.

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat: Palestinian Struggle at 'Decisive Stage'

LD2512193693 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine, stressed yesterday that we are facing a new and decisive stage in the history of our long national

struggle, a stage in which the Israeli occupation of our land and sacred places will begin to end, the dawn of freedom and our national independence will begin, and we will attain our inalienable national rights.

In a message to our Palestinian people on the occasion of Christmas and the New Year, Abu 'Ammar added: We bear many responsibilities which demand that we give limitlessly in order to build our national institutions and infrastructures and their facilities in all areas of life so that we may witness the birth of our independent state with Holy Jerusalem as its capital.

'Draft Constitution' of Palestinian Authority

JN2612171893 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Dec 93 p 15

["Exclusive" report by 'Awdah 'Awdah in Amman: "Text of the Draft Constitution of the Palestinian Authority in the Transitional Phase, Which Will Soon Be Submitted to the PLO Executive Committee for Approval"]

[Text] In the name of the Palestinian people.

PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat,

Cognizant of the [Palestine] National Council [PNC] resolution of 15 November 1988, the [PLO] Central Council has approved the following law, which has been issued by us:

Law No. ... of the year ... for the national authority during the transitional phase.

Chapter I
General

Article 1
This law is to be applied during the transitional phase.

Article 2
The Palestinian people are the source of power which they will exercise during the transitional phase through the legislative, executive, and judicial authorities in accordance with this law.

Chapter II
The Legislative Authority

Article 3
The national authority government, which will be formed in accordance with this law and which will henceforth be called the Government, will exercise the legislative authority during the transitional phase until the legislative council is elected. The council will then take over the legislative authority.

Chapter III
The Executive Authority
First: The President

Article 4
The Executive Committee chairman will be the supreme head of the executive authority and will exercise his prerogatives as given to him in the PLO bylaws and the decisions of the PNC, Central Council, and Executive Committee in addition to the prerogatives enunciated in this law and will henceforth be called the President.

Article 5
Before assuming his duties, the President will take the following oath before the Executive Committee:

"I swear by Almighty God that I will be faithful to the homeland and to its sanctities and national heritage, to preserve the law, to serve the Palestinian people, and to honestly carry out the duties assigned to me."

Article 6
The presidential term is six years. No one can assume the presidency for more than two consecutive terms. The first presidential term of the first president will begin as soon as he takes the oath of office.

Article 7
The President will appoint a vice president within 60 days of his assumption of his duties. The vice president will take the president's place during his absence or if he is incapacitated. The president will define the vice president's other duties.

Article 8
The President is the supreme commander of the Palestinian security forces, which will take orders from him.

Article 9
The President issues laws after they have been approved by the legislative authority.

Article 10
The President has the right to issue a private amnesty and to commute prison terms. As for the general amnesty, it will be issued in accordance with a special law.

Article 11
No death sentence is carried out until the President approves it. Any such sentence must be submitted to him by the head of the Government-Council, who will give his views on the matter.

Article 12
The President exercises his authority by decrees he issues in accordance with valid laws and regulations.

Second: The National Authority Government

Article 13
This law stipulates the establishment of a council called "The National Authority Government." This Council will be appointed by the Executive Committee and will be responsible to it in matters that are within the Council's prerogatives.

Article 14
In general, the Council will assume the country's administration except concerning matters that were or are assigned to other persons or bodies.

Article 15

The Council will be composed of a head and a number of members in accordance with the requirements of the public interest. The appointment decision will specify the department for which each member is responsible. A member may be responsible for one or more departments according to the appointment decision.

Article 16

Before assuming office, the head and members of the Council must take the oath as stated in Article 5 of this law before the President.

Article 17

Neither the head nor the members of the Council are allowed to purchase any government property even if in an auction. The head and members of the Council are not allowed, as long as they are in office, to be members on the board of any company, practice commerce, engage in any profession, or receive a salary or any other remuneration from any company or source.

Article 18

The head and members of the Council are jointly responsible before the President for the country's general policy within the Council's prerogatives. Each member is responsible before the President for the work of his department.

Article 19

The head of the Council will assume the responsibility of guiding its work, supervising the implementation of its decisions, directing the activities of the various departments and the execution of their functions, and implementing the Council's policy in addition to those functions assigned to it by law.

Article 20

The functions of the departments will be defined by regulations drafted by the Council and approved by the President.

Article 21

1. He will be responsible for running all affairs concerning his department and according to his functions.

2. The head of the Council will act within his prerogatives and function. He will refer other issues to the Council to make the appropriate decision.

Article 22

Article 14 of this law notwithstanding, the Council is authorized to:

1. Draft the general policy within the limits of the functions of the Council and in the light of proposals made by its members.

2. Implement the general policy set by the competent Palestinian authorities.

3. Draft and approve the general budget.

4. Supervise the machinery of government.

5. Follow up the implementation of the laws and ensure that they are abided by.

6. Follow up on the performance and fulfillment of duties by departments, ministries, and other units of the machinery of government, as well as coordination among them.

7. Discuss the various ministries' recommendations and policies to fulfill their functions.

8. Fulfill any other functions stipulated by this law, or any other law issued by the Council (the Government), including the legislative power as stated in Article 3 of this law.

Article 23

The Government will meet at the request of the President or the head of the Council. The session will be considered valid if the majority of members attend. Decisions are made with a simple majority. If votes are equal, the side to which the head of the Council voted will prevail. The head of the Council and Council members will sign the Council decisions and implement them, each according to his function.

Article 24

The Council will have a secretary to organize its meetings, prepare the agenda and minutes of its sessions, follow up the implementation of its decisions, and keep its documents and files.

The secretary will be appointed by a Council decision. He will exercise his duties according to the instructions he is given by the Council (the Government) or his superior according to established norms. The secretary will attend the Council meetings but does not participate in the discussions unless he is asked to do so and has no voting rights.

Article 25

The head of each department will exercise the following jurisdictions and prerogatives within his department/ministry:

1. Propose the general policy for his department/ministry and supervise its implementation once it is approved.

2. Supervise the work in his department and issue the necessary instructions for that purpose.

3. Implement the general budget in accordance with the funds allocated to his department.

4. Propose laws concerning his department.

5. Delegate some of his powers to the department under secretary or the heads of sections and senior staff at his department, as and when needed.

6. Any other prerogatives and jurisdictions allowed by laws and the instructions, bills, and decisions based on them.

Article 26

Each department will have an under secretary appointed by a Council decision (thereafter referred to as the department under secretary in this law).

The department under secretary will run the affairs of the department under the supervision of its head and

according to his instructions. He will specifically supervise the staff and workers in the department and its sections and follow up the implementation of its authorized policies and plans.

Additionally, the under secretary will exercise the prerogatives and functions delegated to him by the head of department in accordance with Article 25-6 of this law.

Article 27
The general offices of each department will consist of the head of the department and his bureau, the department under secretary, and the sections stipulated by the administrative structure of the department's general office. These sections answer directly to the department under secretary. The general office of each department must include central administrative units for financial and administrative affairs and one for legal affairs if the need arises. These central units will serve the department general office and the committees and specialized agencies affiliated with that department.

Article 28
Sections in each department will be set up by the decision of the head of department and in accordance with the budget allocated to his department. They can also be dissolved by him. The decision to set up sections will determine the functions of each section.

Article 29
The head of each section will submit to the Council detailed reports on his department's activities, policies, and plans, as well as its achievements as compared to the set objectives for his department within the context of the general plan, as well as proposals and recommendations for future policies. These reports will be submitted regularly so that the Council is fully aware of the activities and policies of each department.

Article 30
An office for legislation and fatwa will be established under the chairmanship of a legal adviser, appointed by the president. In general, the office will present legal advise to the Council and various departments on issues presented to it. The office will also draft resolutions, legislative bills, and resolutions. Administratively, the office will be affiliated with the department of justice.

Article 31
The appointment of employees, as well as the terms of their employment will be in accordance with the laws in force.

Article 32
In the course of efforts to render services and grant people their rights, the procedures employed must be simple. Rapid accomplishment of tasks must be underscored. Performance of tasks and duties must be in conformity with the law and public interest.

Article 33
The head and members of the Council will exercise the powers and prerogatives enjoyed by their counterpart ministers as stipulated in the legislations in force once this law goes into effect. This will continue until this law is amended or revoked in accordance with the relevant provisions.

Article 34
The executive authority must give citizens, political parties, trade unions, associations, and other organizations ample opportunity to debate policies before they are decided. This must be done by way of announcing these policies and consulting with these organizations.

Second: [as published] Security Forces and the Police Force:

Article 35
The police force is a regular force affiliated with the President. It was formed to serve the people, protect society, keep the peace as well as public order and public decency. It will perform its tasks within the confines of the law. It will accord full respect for rights and liberties without any discrimination or prejudice. All must cooperate with the police force and help it perform its duties. The Security Forces will be governed by a separate law.

Third: Public Councils And Organizations:

Article 36
By Council decrees, specialized public councils and organizations will be launched. Their job is to help the Council formulate an overall policy on public service issues. These councils and organizations could be independent with their own legal counsel. They will carry out specific activities spelled out in the decrees ordering their formation. In this case, they will be launched by decrees.

Fourth: Administrative Units:

Article 37
The country will be divided into administrative units, enjoying some independent legal authority. Each and every administrative unit will have a popular council to be chosen by universal suffrage as spelled out in the law.

The law will delineate the prerogatives of administrative units, their financial revenues, as well as their relationship with the central authority. The law will also identify their roles in preparing and implementing development plans, and also in monitoring various activities. Whenever possible, such divisions will be decided in accordance with the population density.

Fifth: General Provisions:

Article 38
No administrative unit or any official thereof is entitled to endorse any financial commitment, or to undertake any such commitments except within the confines of the law. Any violation of these instructions is deemed null and void.

Article 39

No administrative unit or any official thereof is entitled to issue decisions, instructions, or regulations violating the legislations in force. Any such decisions, instructions, or regulations are deemed null and void.

Article 40
Each and every administrative unit is entitled to exercise its prerogatives, perform its duties, and issue the necessary decisions, instructions, or regulations within the confines of the law.

Article 41
The recruitment of employees to fill vacant positions at public service departments and specialized councils and organizations will be conducted on the basis of efficiency, expertise, and the ability to do the job in accordance with the relevant job requirements and the concerned organizations' fields of specialty or objectives.

Article 42
The Palestinian employees currently receiving their salaries from the public treasury will retain their positions. The public service regulations in force will be applied to them until these regulations are amended or revoked in accordance with the relevant provisions.

Sixth: Finances

Article 43
The introduction, amendment, and revocation of public taxes will only be made by law. Any complete or partial exemption from these taxes will have to be granted in accordance with the stipulations of the law.

Article 44
The law will spell out the special regulations pertaining to the preparation and endorsement of the budget. The law will also regulate the disbursement of the funds allocated in the budget.

Article 45
The law will spell out the special provisions pertaining to the collection of public funds, as well as the procedures regarding their disbursement.

Article 46
The beginning of the fiscal year will be determined by law. If the draft budget is not endorsed prior to the start of a new fiscal year, expenditures will continue to be conducted by monthly allocations based on the monthly expenditure of the past year.

Article 47
All collected tax revenues and other earnings must be turned in to the public treasury, and be reflected in the budget. No segment of the public treasury funds will be earmarked or used for any purposes whatsoever except in accordance with the law.

Article 48
A Bureau of the Comptroller will be formed by law. The law will guarantee the independence of this bureau, which will be affiliated with the head of the National Authority Council. This bureau will help the administrative apparatus monitor the collection of public revenues and expenditures in accordance with budgetary limits. The bureau will submit an annual report to the Council on its work and activities. In this report, it will also detail violations, if there are any, and determine the parties responsible for these violations. Once the legislative council is formed, the bureau will be affiliated with it. This bureau will then submit its annual report to the legislative council, as well as the National Authority Council.

The law provides for the immunity of the bureau chairman, who will be granted the necessary powers and prerogatives to perform his duties in the best possible manner.

Article 49
General loans are contracted by law. A loan agreement may be signed or guaranteed by a law, within the limits of the allocations set by the budget law.

Article 50
A law will regulate the rules pertaining to banks.

Chapter IV
The Judiciary

Article 51
Judges are independent, answerable only to the law.

Article 52
The rules concerning judicial appointments, removals, immunities, and promotions, as well as any other issues relating to the judiciary will be specified by a law.

Article 53
A law will specify the types of courts, their functions, and the litigation procedures. A law will also regulate settlements in administrative disputes. No decision or administrative action will be protected from the supervision of the judiciary.

Article 54
1. Courts are open to everybody and are protected against any interference in their internal affairs.
2. Trials will be held in public unless the court itself feels the trial should be held in camera out of concern for public order or values.

Article 55
Regular courts will exercise the right to administer justice against all people and in all lawsuits, including the lawsuits filed by or against the administration, except in cases when the rights of the judiciary are delegated to secret courts established according to the law.

Article 56
The general prosecutor's office will file lawsuits in the name of the people. A law will regulate this body, specify its functions, and set the qualifications for the individuals who can hold this office.

Chapter V

Public Rights and Freedoms

Article 57
Palestine recognizes basic human rights and freedoms as stipulated by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights; the International Agreement on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; the International Agreement on Civic and Political Rights; the International Agreement on Ending All Forms of Racial Discrimination; and other international agreements and charters that guarantee these rights and freedoms. Palestine respects these rights and freedoms, and the Palestinian authorities seek to join these agreements.

Article 58
Each individual has the right to life. Capital punishment is prohibited.

Article 59
All people are equal in human dignity. No one should be subjected to torture or harsh, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. Specifically, no medical or scientific experiments will be conducted on any individual without his consent. Statements taken under torture or harsh, inhuman, or degrading circumstances, or gained by use of threats, will be considered invalid.

Article 60
Each citizen has the right to participate in public life and to stand for any public post or office in accordance with the law. Qualification is the only criterion for choosing holders of public offices.

Article 61
Each person has the right to freedom and security. No person will be wrongfully arrested or detained. No one will be deprived of his freedom except for reasons stipulated by law and according to measures stipulated therein.

Article 62
Each person has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and faith.

Article 63
Each person has the right to free expression through spoken and written word, pictures, or any other means of expressions, taking into consideration what the law stipulates in terms of respect for the rights and reputation of others and the protection of national security, public order, public health, or public values.

Article 64
The freedom to establish political parties is guaranteed provided the objective and activities of such parties do not conflict with the basic principles stipulated by this law, and provided that these parties practice their activities through peaceful means. The law will regulate the rules pertaining to the establishment of political parties.

Article 65
The freedom of the press, printing, publishing, and media is guaranteed. Censorship of the press is prohibited. Warning, suspending, or dissolving the press through an administrative measure is also prohibited. In a declared state of emergency, certain censorship may be imposed on the press, publications, and media in matters concerning public safety or public security, provided this is done in line with the law.

Article 66
The personal affairs of any individual or the affairs of his family, house, and correspondence cannot be subjected to any arbitrary or illegal intrusion. An individual cannot be subjected to any campaigns that undermine his honor or reputation. The law provides protection against such intrusions.

Article 67
Houses are to be respected. They cannot be entered or searched without a justified legal order in accordance with the rules of law.

Article 68
Private property is a right for every individual that cannot be encroached upon except when it is necessary by law and in the public interest. Private property cannot be expropriated except in cases of public interest and in return for just compensation in accordance with the measures that the law stipulates.

Article 69
Freedom of economic activities is guaranteed. The law organizes the principles for supervising economic activities in accordance with the public interest.

Article 70
The families of the injured, the handicapped, and the martyrs have the right to care and security. The Palestinian authorities will provide them with care and rehabilation in accordance with the available capabilities.

Article 71
Mothers and children will be protected, and care for families and youths will be provided, as well as providing appropriate circumstances for developing their talents as a right for all youths and a duty that the society should shoulder along with the Palestinian authorities, in accordance with their capabilities.

Article 72
Work is a right, a duty, and an honor. The Palestinian authorities will work to ensure equal opportunities for citizens to enable them to practice this right under laws that provide social justice. Slave or forced labor is not allowed except in the following cases:
1. Any service that is of military nature or any other national service that is forced by the law on conscientious objectors.
2. Any service that is imposed in the case of emergencies or disasters that threaten the lives and welfare of the society.
3. Any actions or services that are part of ordinary civil commitments.

Article 73

1. Education is a right for all citizens. It is free and compulsory, at least during the elementary stage. The Palestinian authorities will work for providing education in all stages.
2. Minorities and others have the right to open private schools on the condition of that they take into consideration the general rules stipulated by the law.
3. The educational authorities will supervise education as a whole, and the universities and scientific research centers will enjoy respect and independence in accordance with the law.

Article 74
The right to hold peaceful gatherings is recognized. No restrictions will be imposed on this right other than those the law stipulates and those considered important measures in a democratic society.

Article 75
1. Any individual has the right to freely form societies with others, including the formation of unions or joining unions to protect his interests.
2. No restrictions will be imposed on practicing this right except the restrictions stipulated by law and those considered necessary measures in a democratic society in order to safeguard national security, public safety or order, safeguard public health or manners, or protect others' rights and liberties. This article does not prevent the imposition of legal restrictions on security men concerning practicing this right.

Article 76
No citizen will be deported from his homeland or be prevented from returning or leaving his homeland. He will not be handed to any foreign quarter, except within the framework of agreements on extradition of criminals.

Article 77
Those who are granted political asylum by the Palestinian authorities will not be extradited in accordance with the rule of international law.

Article 78
Every individual has the right to address the public authorities on issues that personally concern him or that concern public issues.

Article 79
The freedom of belief and the practice of religious rites is guaranteed unless public order or manners are violated.

Article 80
Access to holy places and buildings with the aim of visiting these sites is guaranteed to all citizens and foreigners without discrimination. Likewise, the freedom to worship in these places is also guaranteed unless security and public order or manners are violated.

Chapter VI
The Supremacy of Law
The Supremacy of the law is the foundation for the system of government in Palestine.

Article 82
All Palestinian authorities and agencies must abide by the law and will be answerable to any violation of the law. The judiciary's independence and immunities, and respect for its verdicts are basic guarantees for the protection of rights and freedoms and the establishment of the supremacy of law.

Article 83
All people are equal before the judiciary. They are also all equal before the law. They enjoy an equal right to protection from the law without any discrimination based on race, color, sex, language, faith, political or nonpolitical views, ethnic or social origin, wealth, lineage, or any other reason.

Article 84
Litigation is a right guaranteed to all people. No administrative action or decision can be protected from the supervision of the judiciary.

Article 85
The accused is innocent until proven guilty in a court of law, which provides guarantees for his defense.

Article 86
Individuals should be he held responsible for their own actions. No one can be convicted for carrying out an action—or refraining from carrying out an action—ex post facto. The action must constitute a crime when it was committed, according to the national or international law. No punishment more severe than that which was in force when the crime was committed can be meted out. If after the crime was committed a law came into force stipulating a lesser punishment, the person who committed the crime must benefit from this reduced punishment. Double jeopardy is not allowed. No one will face a new trial or punishment for a crime, of which he was either convicted or acquitted in a final verdict, issued in accordance with the law and the valid criminal procedures.

Article 87
Except in cases of flagrante delicto, no one can be arrested, searched, detained, or have any constraints placed on his freedom, or be banned from moving around freely, except through an order dictated by the investigation procedures or public security. Such an order must be issued by the competent judge or the public prosecutor's office in accordance with the law. The law must state the duration for the precautionary detention. The detention or imprisonment of any person in a place not covered by the laws on prisons is forbidden.

Article 88
Criminal lawsuits can be filed only upon orders from a judicial authority, except in cases stated by the law.

Article 89
All those deprived of their freedom must receive humane treatment that respects the authentic dignity of human beings.

Article 90

Any person arrested or detained must be informed immediately of the reason for his arrest or detention. He must be informed in detail—and in language that he understands—of the nature of, and the reason for the charges leveled against him. He must be given enough time and facilities to allow him to prepare his defense and contact a lawyer of his own choosing. He must also be brought, as quickly as possible and without any unjustified delay, before a court, which he attends in person, and which guarantees his defense through a lawyer of his own choosing. If he cannot afford to hire a lawyer, then the court must appoint a lawyer to defend him.

Article 91
Verdicts are issued and executed in the name of the people. Civil servants who refrain from executing a verdict or obstruct its implementation are committing a crime punishable by law, which also specifies the kind of punishment. The person who won the case can, in this instance [when justice is obstructed], file a criminal lawsuit before a specialized court.

Chapter VII
Final and Transitional Rules

Article 92
Arabic is the official language for Palestine. Another official language can be adopted by a law. This does not prevent the use of any other language in cases stipulated by law.

Article 93
Sovereignty over natural resources in Palestine must remain at the hands of the Palestinian people. These resources are to be utilized and used for the benefit of the Palestinian people and in accordance with the law.

Article 94
Laws are issued in the name of the Palestinian people. They are to be published in the official gazette after being issued and signed by the President.
Article 95

Laws and legislative decisions apply only to matters covered by the law after it goes into effect. When necessary, and in matters other than criminal matters, a law may stipulate otherwise.

Article 96
Provided they do not conflict with the provisions of this law, the laws, bills, regulations, and resolutions currently in force in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank will remain in force until they are amended or annulled according to the provisions of the law.

Article 97
This law will be published in the official gazette. It goes into effect as of 13 December 1993.

Issued in ... [no place specified as published]

[signed] Yasir 'Arafat

'Text' of PLO Statement on Israeli Land Seizure

LD2612183093 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] The PLO Executive Committee this morning issued a statement, the text of which is as follows:

The PLO Executive Committee held a meeting yesterday at which it discussed a number of issues. It considered the Israeli authorities' seizures and closure of new Palestinian land embracing thousands of Donums of land west of Ramallah, and land surrounding the city of Jerusalem. This is in order to establish a land link to a number of Israeli settlements.

The Executive Committee also considered the provocative acts of groups of settlers in the so-called laying of foundation stones of scores of new settlements. This has been taking place in full view and hearing distance of the Israeli Army that did nothing to stop it.

These provocative acts constitute a flagrant breach of the Declaration of Principles agreement signed between the Israeli Government and the Palestine Liberation Organization. It gives the impression that the Israeli side is acting as if the agreement does not exist. Such acts are considered a serious escalation of the violations committed by the Israeli side, by continuing to seize and close lands, expand the settlements, and continue to maintain the siege of the Arab city of Jerusalem, in addition to other practices that weaken Israeli credibility on being committed to the entire peace process.

The Executive Committee demands from the Israeli Government an immediate stop to all these acts and cancellation all measures that have been taken to seize and close new lands, and that the government must firmly stand up to the serious acts of the Israeli settlers and end the isolation of the Holy Jerusalem area.

Official Views Israeli Proposals on Size of Jericho

JN2412171793 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1635 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Tunis, 24 Dec (SANA)—PLO Executive Committee member Dr. Samir Ghawshah has said that Israel has agreed to withdraw its troops from a 150-square-km area around Jericho.

In a statement here today, Ghawshah added that PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat relayed this information to the PLO Executive Committee members last night. 'Arafat informed them that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin had agreed to this, Ghawshah noted.

Ghawshah reaffirmed that the PLO rejects this Israeli proposal, noting that it is demanding that the area of Jericho be 268 square km.

Ghawshah indicated that the next round of talks in Cairo will be the last, and that it will be followed by a meeting

between 'Arafat and Rabin to sign an agreement on the beginning of the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho.

Palestinian sources, which preferred anonymity, believed that Nisim Zvili, secretary general of the Israeli Labor Party [name and title as received], who is currently in Tunis, is the person who relayed Rabin's agreement that the area of Jericho be 150 square km.

The sources indicated that the Palestinian leadership might agree on a 200-square-km area around Jericho.

Quray' Discusses Oslo, Paris Talks

NC2412083693 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Ahmad Quray', head of the PLO Economic Department and one of the members of the Palestinian delegation to the Versailles talks in France, in Tunis, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz in Cairo carried in the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] Mr. Ahmad Quray', we welcome you on the Voice of the Arabs.

[Quray'] Thank you.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] We start this dialogue with you after your return yesterday from Versailles, France, and after the talks you held with Israel. Could you brief us on what took place during your meetings in France?

[Quray'] Actually, the talks are still addressing pending issues. These topics are: the crossing points, the actual area of Jericho, and the issue of settlements and roads in Gaza. These talks are taking place in a positive atmosphere. However, they have not reached a decisive result so far. In other words, the result of these meetings has been to agree to meet again on Tuesday morning to continue discussion of these pending matters, which need to be resolved so that the Gaza-Jericho First agreement can be implemented as part of the Declaration of Principles.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Brother Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'], the issue of control over the crossing points continues to represent one of the most important and prominent points of conflict between you and the Israelis. What has been done with regard to this problem?

[Quray'] I would rather not talk about it in detail, especially right now, because it is the focal point of discussion and the basic issue over which an agreement is being negotiated to facilitate agreement over other matters. As you know, the agreement talks about coordination. It also talks about withdrawal from Jericho and the Gaza Strip. Discussions on our part are proceeding from this understanding. I cannot say anything before we agree on a final solution, or disagree, God forbid, as the case may be. Only then will we be able to talk about things. At this point, we leave the opportunity to the talks to explore all possibilities for success.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] What has the Israeli side presented in these negotiations? And are there any concessions by the Israeli side?

[Quray'] What I can say is that we are closer now than we were before to a solution. However, we are not in full agreement yet. We are now closer to each other with regard to this point. As I mentioned to you, our logic in these talks is based on the idea that there is withdrawal. Another concept is that there has to be coordination. The third and most basic concept is to facilitate the crossing for Palestinians and to radically change the situation from what it was in the past. These are the three pillars that I can safely say are the logic behind our position. The Israeli stand does not greatly contradict this position. But there are still various opinions that express contradictory positions.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] You stated that the negotiations were partly positive and that the Palestinian and Israeli stands are coming closer to each other. Has the Israeli side made any concessions or have you made any concessions?

[Quray'] The issue is not one of concessions. The issue is that these negotiations started with the first meeting in Oslo, Norway, last week. The second meeting was held in Paris. The fact that these negotiations continue shows the seriousness of both stands to reach agreement. The negotiations also focus on fixed points that are still under discussion. Therefore, defining the points and concentrating discussion on them is in itself a positive point. The topic is not being discussed as a whole anymore. The points have been defined. Each side noted its stand clearly. Discussions have been taking place over these stands and will continue to do so. I consider this to be a positive point.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] It is known that you have held secret talks with the Israeli side. Can we expect something new in the next few days?

[Quray'] Regarding this [Declaration of Principles] agreement, yes, I expect something. The withdrawal process must start as stipulated in the agreement. The Palestinian people must feel that there is a withdrawal. The Israelis must also feel that there is seriousness in implementing this agreement. Consequently, I expect that something will be achieved soon.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] What about the summit meeting between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin? Will this meeting be held shortly?

[Quray'] Yes, this meeting will take place. However, we hope agreement will be reached so that this meeting will be held on the basis of implementing the agreement and not on the basis of discussing details for which summit meetings have no time. Therefore, we hope an agreement will be reached so that the meeting will take place.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Looking at financial and economic aid for the Palestinians, what has been done so far in this regard?

[Quray'] The committee of the donor states held a meeting in Paris a week ago. That meeting was held within the framework of the consultative committee and was intended to approve the first part of the funds earmarked for aid for the occupied Palestinian lands. In fact, the atmosphere was very positive. The conferees adhered to the full scope of the Palestinian program submitted as an emergency program for the first year. I can proudly say that the response was even greater than my personal expectations. I can say this is a positive development and a quick response from the international community to the nature and scope of the Palestinian requirements for development and reconstruction in the occupied territories.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] What do you have to say to the states that cast doubt on the PLO's ability to deal with these funds and use them for infrastructure projects in the occupied territories?

[Quray'] I can say that the experience and know-how of the PLO and our Palestinian people and the requirements of our occupied territories that are rising after protracted suffering will prove to all our ability and our people's ability to administer these funds correctly and soundly. We will also prove our ability to absorb these funds and use them in a correct and sound way that represents a first step toward a correct development process in the occupied Palestinian lands.

'Shadow Government' Set Up in Gaza Strip

TA2312200193 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Announcer-read report, followed by Roni Daniyel video report; Palestinian speakers identified by caption on screen]

[Text] A group of Palestinians in Gaza has proclaimed itself a shadow government and is attempting to manage the residents' affairs at this time. The composition and management of the body are not fully accepted by Yasir 'Arafat, but an organ has been established, and there is even struggle over budgets. Our army affairs correspondent Roni Daniyel attended a session of the shadow government in Gaza today.

[Begin recording] [Abu-Rami] We are waiting for the Rabin-'Arafat agreement.

[Daniyel] And then you will begin work?

[Abu-Rami] Yes.

[Daniyel] But they are not just waiting. A local leadership is forming in Gaza. It has already distributed duties, authorities, and even titles. Gathered around the table here are people sharing 100 prison-years between them. They meet like this twice a week. Chairman 'Arafat is, for the time being, represented here through the fax machine. Orders and instructions come in, but there are also local initiatives by this group.

[Sufyan al-Zaydan] As you can see, for the time being, we function as a government, but we have no budgets or laws. We simply do the work of a government but without options.

[Salim al-Zuray'i] We are independent regarding this region. At the same time, we are linked with our leadership.

[Daniyel] Outside an opposition paper has been issued. It sharply criticizes this forum. The caption of the front page cartoon reads: Everybody, but everybody, wants to be a minister.

[Ihab al-Ashqar] We want to organize the movement, all the members of the movement, and hold primaries [last word in English] everywhere. When we declare this or that person as the Fatah official or commander, we will no longer receive instructions by fax or phone. He will emerge from the elections or referendum.

[Daniyel] Democracy is not exactly what 'Arafat wants, but here they are certain he can be convinced. To make sure, however, they have already established facts on the ground. [end recording]

Hamas Reportedly 'Would Accept' Cease-Fire

Yasin on Terms for Cease-Fire

TA2412120493 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spiritual leader, said this morning that his movement would accept a cease-fire with Israel provided that the use of firearms against Palestinian stops. Yasin added that Hamas will not stop its activities until the Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip are evacuated. Shaykh Yasin made the remarks at a meeting this morning with Knesset Member Talib al-Sani' at the Ramla Prison hospital where Yasin is being imprisoned. [passage omitted]

At the same time, more than 1,000 Hamas and Islamic Jihad leaflets were found last night in a large bag on Temple Mount urging the termination of the peace process, attacks on the settlers, and exacerbating the security situation in the territories. The Jerusalem Police launched an investigation.

Hamas Official Says 'No Comment'

JN2412091693 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 24 Dec 93 pp 1, 27

[Excerpts] Occupied Gaza, News Agencies—The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has announced it will suspend its operations against Jewish settlers for three days as of yesterday evening, Thursday, and that it is ready to review its stand on escalating its attacks against

the settlers if Israel responds to certain demands. Hamas stated this in a statement it distributed in the Gaza Strip. [passage omitted]

In Amman, Hamas official spokesman engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah has stated in reply to a question by AL-RA'Y: I have no comment as yet as I have received nothing, and I cannot confirm or deny what has taken place.

Killing Proves Cease-Fire 'Hoax'

NC2512114293 Paris AFP in English 1032 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Amman, Dec 25 (AFP)—An Islamic Resistance Movement (HAMAS) spokesman on Saturday [25 December] denied that the Muslim fundamentalist group had offered to halt attacks on Jewish settlers, describing its reported ceasefire as an Israeli "hoax."

A Hamas representative in Amman, Muhammad Nazzal, told AFP: "The cease-fire announcement is not true, and the proof is the killing on Friday of an Israeli colonel."

Israeli army officials said Lieutenant-Colonel Meir Mintz, gunned down in the occupied Gaza Strip on Friday, was the most senior officer ever killed by HAMAS.

The military wing of Hamas in the occupied territories, 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, claimed responsibility for the attack, in which a Palestinian passerby was also killed and three soldiers were wounded.

In a statement which appeared in the Gaza Strip on Thursday Hamas announced for the first time a three-day halt to attacks on Jewish settlers, to give Israel a chance to reciprocate.

However, it said the struggle against the Israeli army would continue.

Nazzal said Israelis hatched the ceasefire statement in a bid to "create chaos and uncertainty among Hamas fighters in the occupied territories."

Meanwhile, another Hamas spokesman in Amman, Ibrahim Ghawshah, said Hamas was seeking to clinch 40 percent of the leadership of the "Palestinian Forces Alliance," grouping 10 factions opposed to the Israel-PLO autonomy deal.

"Our draft formula favors a 50-member central leadership: 40 percent for Hamas, 40 percent for the other nine factions and 20 percent for independents," Ghawshah told AFP.

He said it was the same ratio as that demanded by Hamas three years ago as a condition for joining the Palestine National Council (PNC), the Palestinian parliament-in-exile.

Other opposition groups, including the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), favored a 30-member central leadership, consisting of two representatives from each of the 10 factions and 10 independents, said Ghawshah.

Hamas Official on Rejectionist 'Alliance' Meeting

JN2612160893 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Dec 93 pp 1, 22

[By Hamdan al-Hajj]

[Text] Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah, the official spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has said that the fact that no inter-Palestinian clashes have taken place since the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement more than three months ago is a healthy sign and a beacon for the Palestinian people's jihad.

In an exclusive statement to AL-DUSTUR, Ghawshah added that since the recognition of Israel by the PLO on 9 September, and the signing of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement on 13 September, there has been no contacts between the PLO or the Fatah Movement and the Hamas Movement. As for Hamas, he noted, it is willing to restart the dialogue once the PLO or the Fatah leadership revokes its recognition of Israel as well as the agreement it has concluded.

Ghawshah said the Hamas Movement is eager to spare the Palestinian people from any infighting. He believes that once the Palestinian police force, which is part of the Palestinian people, enters Gaza and Jericho, its main job will be to confront settlers, who are wreaking havoc everywhere. He ruled out the possibility of the police force confronting the heroic stone-throwers.

Ghawshah said that Hamas' demand for 40 percent of the Palestine National Council seats, and the same percentage of seats in the alliance command of the 10 factions [opposed to the Arab-Israeli peace talks] is reasonable. As such, it should be accepted. He added that brothers within the 10 factions should not view the issue with sensitivity. He rejected claims that Hamas seeks to dominate the alliance. He argued that the party that is offering the greatest sacrifices is the one best suited to represent the Palestinian people. He hoped that the Hamas Movement, along with all other factions, including Fatah, will continue to make sacrifices.

Ghawshah indicated that the meeting held by the 10 factions in Damascus on the night before last addressed the organizational formula to be adopted by the alliance of the 10 Palestinian factions. This formula must define the alliance command, the number of alliance command members, the way this command is formed, as well as its basic tasks. Once an agreement is reached on all this, the alliance's political program and organizational formula will be announced. Then, a date will be set for the convocation of a general national congress to announce decisions and the political action program, as well. This will be done after a date and a venue for the congress are set.

Ghawshah said that the program of the Palestinian factions alliance underscores opposition to the Gaza-Jericho accord, efforts to thwart it, and the need to continue the intifadah. This program also stresses the need to rebuild the PLO institutions on democratic foundations, as well as the need to adhere to the Palestinian National Charter. The Hamas Movement, he added, has refused to incorporate into the political program a paragraph relating to international legitimacy resolutions and the establishment of a Palestinian state over phases, because this would entail recognition of the Israeli entity.

Answering a question on Hamas' purported decision to declare a unilateral truce, Ghawshah said that this issue is still unclear. In this regard, he noted the operation carried out a few days ago, in which an Israeli officer in charge of the operations of undercover units was killed. These units, which included Israeli Army personnel posing as Arabs, have killed a large number of Palestinians, including martyr 'Imad 'Aql. He indicated that this operation has proven that the real dialogue with Israel is not the one conducted in Paris, Oslo, or Cairo, but rather the one currently taking place on the streets of the Gaza Strip, Hebron, Jerusalem, Ramallah, and the northern West Bank.

PFLP Official Rejects Hamas Demand

JN2712090893 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 27 Dec 93 p 13

[By 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Khatib]

[Excerpt] In a statement to AL-ASWAQ, 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh, member of the Political Bureau of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], has said the Hamas Movement's demand to have 40 percent of the seats within the alliance of the Palestinian forces is rejected.

Malluh called for canceling the principle of quota distribution to the 10 factions. This principle was adopted by the PLO and led to the Gaza-Jericho agreement, he said. As 10 factions, we do not want to repeat this miserable experience in inter-Palestinian relations. We propose instead the principle of equality among the 10 factions, in line with standards to be agreed upon. Popular conferences, for example, should be adopted as part of equal representation of the 10 factions.

Malluh asserted that the "alliance" will not end if agreement was not reached in this regard. He added: The PFLP is eager to promote the formula of alliance among the factions. Even if no agreement is reached on "representation", the continuation of the alliance—which agreed on a political program earlier this month—is a must. [passage omitted]

PFLP Denies Members Joined Palestinian Police

JN2512144293 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Dec 93 p 5

[Text] Damascus—Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] sources in Damascus denied that any of its members are ready to join the Palestinian police groups, as claimed by the Israeli Television the day before yesterday.

In a statement circulated in Damascus yesterday, the source said the PFLP "denies allegations by the Israeli enemy, who normally circulate such allegations to create confusion among the PFLP rank and file inside the occupied territories."

The statement explains that Jalal Hafiz 'Azizah and Nasir Abu-'Aziz continue to practice "their roles within the PFLP ranks and are committed to the political line that rejects the [Gaza-Jericho] agreement in part and parcel."

Bethlehem Mayor on Palestinian Flags, Christmas

JN2312165893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1530 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj by Sa'id Mu'addi on 23 December—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Mr. Ilyas Frayj, today you held an emergency meeting of the municipal council on the diplomatic crisis that took place after the PLO flag at the municipal building was taken down. What decision did the meeting come to?

[Frayj] To begin with, I object to calling it the PLO flag. It is the flag of the Palestinian people. It existed before the PLO did, and before there was an Arab-Israeli conflict. It is the Palestinian flag. We hoisted the Palestinian flag in front of the municipal building, taking into account that a mutual and simultaneous, official and written recognition had taken place between the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people, and the Israeli Government. There are Palestinian flags hoisted throughout the Arab territories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Why is there this objection to hoisting the flag in front of the Bethlehem municipal building on Christmas?

[Mu'addi] Abu-Jiryis, have you tried to contact the prime minister's office to intervene to resolve this crisis? What was the response?

[Frayj] I have tried several times. But, most unfortunately, the answer of all those I contacted was negative, negative, negative. I regret this negative attitude by the Israeli authorities.

[Mu'addi] Yes. Consequently, you have contacted the PLO leadership in Tunis. What were the instructions in this regard?

[Frayj] We have contacted brother Yasir 'Arafat. We have put him in the picture. He has been dissatisfied with the Israeli position. He supports and backs the position of the Bethlehem municipal council.

[Mu'addi] Will the celebrations take place in Bethlehem as scheduled?

[Frayj] Two Palestinian flags are now hoisted over the municipal building. Religious ceremonies and rites will take place as usual, because no party has the right to curtail or change anything in these celebrations. We in Bethlehem are more eager than anybody else to maintain religious rights, duties, and obligations, especially at Christmas, which is the feast of love and peace.

[Mu'addi] Will you take part in tomorrow's religious rites on the occasion of the holidays?

[Frayj] Of course. This is a sacred and national duty.

[Mu'addi] Mr. Ilyas Frayj, Bethlehem mayor, thank you very much, and many happy returns.

[Frayj] Many happy returns. Thank you.

Flags Fly During Christmas Celebrations

JN2512071393 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0600 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj in Bethlehem by Ahmad Birru in the studio; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Birru] This year, Bethlehem decided to celebrate Christmas after a six-year gap. But, the Israeli authorities prevented you from hoisting the Palestinian flag over the city. You threatened to cancel the celebrations. What is the latest in this issue?

[Frayj] The celebrations have ended in peace with the participation of 10,000 citizens, both Christians and Muslims, and with the Palestinian flag hoisted over the municipality. The Boy Scouts and Girl Guides were carrying Palestinian flags. Palestinian flags are still flying over the city. The aim of hoisting the flag was to emphasize Palestinian nationality and identity. We did not want any confrontation or challenges.

[Birru] Has Yasir 'Arafat used his good offices with Yitzhaq Rabin?

[Frayj] I contacted His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat yesterday. I think he exerted his efforts. The important thing is that the flag is hoisted. About twenty Boy Scout and Girl Guide groups participated in a procession. Many large Palestinian flags were raised.

[Birru] This means Palestinian insistence triumphed this time?

[Frayj] Right has triumphed.

[Birru] The Palestinian-Israeli negotiations are facing difficulties. You have been a supporter of the self-rule agreement. How do you see the future of these negotiations and the prospects of implementing the agreement?

[Frayj] In my view, there can be no going back on the peace march. Sooner or later, the agreement between the Palestinian and Israeli sides will eventually take shape. The faster we reach an agreement, the better Palestinian citizens will be served. Peoples' suffering will end. Detainees and deportees will return to their homes. The situation is tragic. We need the establishment of a Palestinian administration to put the Palestinian house in order on the basis of law and democracy.

[Birru] Would you like to address a message to the Palestinians on Christmas and the New Year?

[Frayj] From the Church of the Nativity, we tell all Palestinians: Glory to God in the heavens, peace on earth, and goodwill among men. From the city of the messenger of love and peace, we send our greetings to all our Palestinian brothers in all parts of the world on Christmas. We pray God that peace may be realized in the coming year, that the Palestinian people will realize their rights, and their right to establish the Palestinian state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

Algeria

Shop Owners Selling Western Records Threatened

NC2312125293 Paris AFP in English 1237 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Algiers, Dec 23 (AFP)—An Islamic fundamentalist group in Algeria has issued death threats against the owners of shops selling records and cassettes of Western-style music, it was learned here Thursday [23 December].

The self-styled Islamic Salvation Army has sent a leaflet marked "Warning N-1" to several shops warning owners that the sale of such products would lead to reprisals, beginning with beatings or arson attacks, then death if these warnings were ignored.

The document, a copy of which was obtained by AFP, warned shop owners of "a campaign of physical liquidation to purge the ranks of Muslims of impurities by whatever means are considered appropriate."

It accused shopkeepers of "helping to propagate fornication among Moslems by selling cassettes of profane songs which excite the instincts of young people, making them forget God. Islam authorizes the decapitation of singers, and that is also true of those who help to propagate their songs."

Algeria is in a state of undeclared civil war between the secular authorities and militant Islamic groups. Westerners and other foreigners have been warned by Islamic fundamentalists that they should leave the country on pain of death.

Guyon Death Sentence Reduced To Life Imprisonment

LD2312222693 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] The Higher State Council [HCE] has decided to commute a death sentence against Frenchman Didier-Roger Guyon to life imprisonment. The decision to reduce the sentence was reached on humanitarian grounds and came after Guyon had exhausted all means of appeal, according to an Algerian Foreign Ministry statement.

Paper Reports Gunmen Shoot, Kill 5 Policemen

NC2512121093 Paris AFP in English 0854 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Algiers, Dec 25 (AFP)—Gunmen shot dead five Algerian policemen and wounded two others when they ambushed a night patrol in the eastern town of Annaba [name as received], the ALGER REPUBLICAIN daily reported Saturday [25 December].

The police officers were travelling in two vehicles when they came under fire in the attack on Thursday night, the newspaper reported.

Hundreds of people have been killed in clashes between the security forces and suspected Muslim fundamentalists, who began a guerrilla war against the authorities after the army in January 1992 brought about the cancellation of a general election the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

The FIS has since been outlawed.

Egypt

'Arafat Holds Talks With Musa, Sha'th, Mubarak

Sha'th: Cairo Talks 'Last Round'

NC2612155593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1525 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 26 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held a three-hour round of talks with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat on his arrival in Cairo earlier today. Musa stated that his talks with 'Arafat dealt with the ongoing negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis, particularly the recent talks held in Oslo and Paris, and the coming round expected to be held in Cairo tomorrow.

The foreign minister noted that Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres will arrive in Cairo tomorrow afternoon for the Palestinian-Israeli talks. PLO Executive Committee members Mahmud 'Abbas and Ahmad Quray' are also expected in Cairo tomorrow, he added.

[In a related report, Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic at 1500 GMT on 26 December adds: "Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, has stated that the Palestinian-Israeli talks to be held in Cairo tomorrow will be the last round of talks in an attempt to reach an agreement on the main problems obstructing the negotiations."]

Mubarak, 'Arafat Hold Talks

NC2612161093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1555 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 26 Dec (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak received Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat this evening. The two leaders held talks.

Musa on Mubarak-'Arafat Talks

NC2612184593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1800 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 26 Dec (MENA)—Following the two-hour meeting between President Husni Mubarak and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that the two leaders discussed the current

situation in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations and the preparations for the upcoming round of talks scheduled to be held in Cairo from tomorrow evening until Tuesday [28 December].

The foreign minister said that there are still certain obstacles requiring negotiations. However, we hope that through the upcoming Cairo negotiations the two sides will overcome these obstacles, 'Amr Musa added. He said: We hope that the Palestinian-Israeli agreement will be implemented in letter and spirit soon.

The foreign minister said that President Mubarak called on President 'Arafat to pay another visit to Cairo. He said that the Israeli foreign minister is due in Cairo tomorrow afternoon, as well as brothers Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] and Abu-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray']. The other members of the Palestinian delegation will arrive in Cairo tomorrow evening. He said that the delegation accompanying President 'Arafat will remain in Cairo to join the Palestinian delegation to the talks.

The foreign minister said that Egyptian-Palestinian and Egyptian-Israeli meetings will be held upon the arrival of Palestinian and Israeli delegations. They will prepare for the round of talks that will be held on Monday evening.

Asked about the obstacles still facing the talks, Musa said they revolve around the interpretation of some provisions of the agreement. We hope the two sides will reach an agreement on removing these obstacles, he said. Asked whether tomorrow's talks in Cairo will be the last, Musa said that he hopes it will be the last round, indicating that it will be an open session and that everything will depend on what the two sides can agree upon.

Asked whether there are specific Egyptian proposals to remove the obstacles, Musa said that there are Palestinian stances and Israeli stances. Everything depends on the two sides and what they want. Egypt believes that the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement in letter and spirit must be accurate and honest. This will open the road to the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement as a first step among the steps agreed upon.

Asked whether there is an Egyptian invitation to 'Arafat and Rabin to meet in Cairo in the event the obstacles are removed, Musa said if an agreement is reached and the problems are resolved, it is expected that 'Arafat and Rabin will sign the agreement in Cairo.

Asked what will happen if tomorrow's talks achieve no results, Musa said: I do not want to jump to conclusions. I believe that we must give the two sides every opportunity to achieve success. If they do not achieve success, we will see what can be done.

Asked about the Syrian track and whether Egypt is awaiting the results of the al-Asad-Clinton summit on 16 January, Musa said: Egypt has made and is still making efforts. However, the main upcoming event on the Syrian-Israeli track will be the anticipated meeting between Presidents Clinton and al-Asad.

Editorial Views Peace Prospects, Upcoming Talks

NC2712075493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0603 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AKHBAR has affirmed that the round of Palestinian-Israeli talks to be held in Cairo within hours is particularly important for the prospects for progress in the peace process and the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

The newspaper said in its editorial today that there are numerous signs pointing to the importance of this round. Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat wanted to come to Cairo to meet President Mubarak and brief him on the Palestinian-Israeli talks in Oslo, Paris, and Morocco last week.

The paper said that Egypt wants to clarify its views on the current stage in the peace efforts. It affirmed through Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa that the peace agreement known as the Gaza-Jericho agreement is merely a step toward a final settlement the basis of which needs to be self-determination for the Palestinian people.

The newspaper said that despite Egyptian views being clear since the Gaza-Jericho agreement was signed on 13 September, reconfirming these views now is enough to respond to the impudent claims that try to suggest that Egypt is pressuring one side to convince it to make concessions.

Turkish Foreign Minister Cetin Arrives 25 Dec

Cetin, Mubarak Hold Talks

NC2512102693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0915 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 25 Dec (MENA)—Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin arrived in Cairo on a two-day official visit today.

The Turkish foreign minister, who was received upon arrival by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, stated that he will deliver a message to President Husni Mubarak from Turkish President Suleyman Demirel. He added that the Middle East, long subject to instability, needs peace and all the region's countries must seek to overcome the hurdles obstructing the peace process and do their utmost to bring prosperity to their nations.

Cetin announced that his visit to Egypt is designed to boost bilateral ties in every sphere. He said he will discuss with Egyptian officials various regional issues, the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, inter-Mediterranean cooperation, and coordination in the context of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO].

He explained that the ICO is not a military organization and tried exceptionally hard during its meetings in Jeddah and Islamabad to find a solution to the Bosnian problem, which the world has failed to solve. He urged that more humanitarian assistance be extended to the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[In a related report, Cairo MENA in Arabic at 0940 GMT on 25 December adds the following: "President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin today. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa attended the meeting."]

Musa, Cetin Hold News Conference

NC2512155893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1330 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 25 Dec (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has received a message from Turkish President Suleyman Demirel.

This was stated by Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa at a joint news conference with Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin after the first round of official talks between the two sides today.

Musa said that the Turkish minister delivered Demirel's message when he met with President Mubarak earlier in the day.

He said that during their talks today the Egyptian and Turkish delegations continued to discuss subjects raised during the Mubarak-Cetin meeting, especially bilateral relations and issues of mutual concern.

He said the talks dealt with the situation in the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and the CIS, which used to be part of the Soviet Union. The two sides also discussed ways to boost bilateral cooperation, he said.

Musa said the two sides noted with satisfaction the development of Egyptian-Turkish relations in all areas. He pointed out that the two sides today will sign an agreement preventing double taxation to serve the private sector and the businessmen in both countries.

Musa expressed hope that Egyptian-Turkish cooperation will be promoted in all fields.

The Turkish foreign minister said that he carried Turkish President Suleyman Demirel's invitation to President Mubarak to visit Ankara. He said Mubarak accepted the invitation and will visit very soon.

Cetin said that during today's talks a number of issues were discussed in light of the role played by the two countries to achieve peace and stability in the region.

The two sides agreed that the Middle East peace process is irrevocable, and they stressed the need for supporting this process because the Middle East needs peace, security, and stability, he said.

The Turkish minister said he listened to 'Amr Musa's evaluation of the Middle East peace moves, the problems in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the situation in the Gulf. The fighting in Armenia and Azerbaijan was also discussed, he said.

Cetin stressed the willingness of Egypt and Turkey to cooperate to achieve peace and stability.

He said that the two sides agreed on the need for the private sector to play a role in Egyptian-Turkish cooperation.

Asked about Egyptian-Turkish cooperation to face international economic blocs, Cetin said Egypt and Turkey are pursuing a free market policy. As a market that includes more than 120 million people, he added, the two countries can cooperate for the wellbeing of their peoples.

After peace in the Middle East has been achieved, Cetin said, there will be a good chance for supporting cooperation between the two countries and among all peoples of the region.

In this respect, Musa said that Turkey, as one of the states in the region, is concerned about peace. He said Egypt appreciates Turkey's role in the peace process.

On the water problem, the Turkish foreign minister said that the issue was not discussed in today's talks.

He said that Turkey does not want to create a problem on an international level with Syria or Iraq over water because that will not solve the problem.

Up to this moment, Cetin said, there is no problem. Turkey, he added, built some dams from which Syria and Iraq will actually benefit. He explained that the current flow of water in the summer ranges between 150,000 to 200,000 cubic meters, and the amount will increase to about 500,000 cubic meters when the dams are completed.

The Turkish foreign minister said that his country is not willing to create any problem with Syria and Iraq because they are two fraternal and neighboring countries.

Talks End; Accords Signed

NC2512214293 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] The second session of talks between Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin ended this evening. Cetin said the Egyptian-Turkish talks were successful and that the two sides agreed on the importance of bilateral cooperation, especially in economics, trade, and culture. He added that the two sides also agreed to work together to achieve security and stability in the region. He said both countries' views were identical on all issues discussed, primarily on developments in the Middle East and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

At the end of the talks the two ministers signed an agreement on cultural, scientific, and technical cooperation between the two countries. The Turkish foreign minister and Finance Minister Muhammad al-Razzaz also signed an agreement to prevent double taxation between Egypt and Turkey.

Al-Razzaz said that within the context of Egypt's efforts to bolster cooperation with various countries, that country attaches great importance to promoting cooperation with Turkey. He added that Egyptian-Turkish relations are an example for relations between states. He noted that the signed agreement on preventing double taxation is designed to benefit investors in both countries because under this accord the investor will be subject to only one tax in one of the two countries. He said this will help the movement of capital and workers between Egypt and Turkey and the establishment of joint ventures, which will curb tax evasion.

Cetin Meets 'Arafat in Cairo

TA2612183093 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1700 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin concluded his contacts in Egypt and proceeded to Qatar today. On the second day of his official visit to Cairo, Cetin met with Palestinian head of state Yasir 'Arafat and Arab League Secretary General 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid.

In a news conference after his meeting with 'Arafat, Cetin said that 'Arafat asked Turkey to participate in the international force to be established after Israel withdraws from Gaza and Jericho. Cetin declared that when Turkey believes that it can contribute to peace, it will extend every possible assistance with pleasure. [passage omitted]

Mitterrand Confers With Mubarak

NC2712135693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1328 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak this afternoon received French President Francois Mitterrand at the presidential office.

President Mubarak hosted a private luncheon banquet in honor of the French president before he left for Paris following the private visit to Egypt during which he visited St. Catherine and Aswan.

Mubarak's Christmas Message to Clinton Reported

NC2412151593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1302 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak today sent a cable conveying Christmas and New Year congratulations to U.S. President Bill Clinton.

In his cable, President Mubarak expressed his sincere wishes for good health and happiness for President Clinton and for further strength and prosperity for the American people.

As the world approaches a new year, Mubarak expressed his confidence that the United States will continue its constructive role in supporting the efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and remove all the obstacles to the achievement of this goal for the good of the region's nations and world security and stability.

Four Sentinels, Passerby Killed in Asyut Area

NC2612112593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1055 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 26 Dec (MENA)—Four police sentinels from the al-Qusiyah district force in the Asyut Governorate were killed today when unidentified men opened fire at them. In reporting this, a security official in the Interior Ministry said that citizen Na'im Bakhit Hanna, who happened to be on the scene, was also hit by the indiscriminate firing and succumbed to his wounds. The source said that the criminals fired at the four sentinels as they were going to work at the police post in Bani Qurrah and seized their weapons. The commanders of the Asyut Security Directorate, the Public Security, the State Security intelligence, and experts of the criminal laboratory went to the scene of the incident to investigate. Security forces are searching the area to arrest the criminals.

'Fundamentalists' Attack Bus, Wound 9 Austrians

27 Dec Incident Detailed

NC2712090393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0847 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—An explosion took place early this morning near a tourist bus parked near the ancient church of St. George in the old Egypt area.

Police and public security commanders went to the site to determine the cause of the explosion.

According to preliminary information, the explosion occurred in the 'Umar Ibn-al-'Ass Square. The driver of the bus, which belongs to a tourist company, was surprised by an explosion near the bus.

He sped off with his vehicle, stopping outside the St. George Church.

The explosion shattered the windows on both sides of the bus; it is likely that this could have been the result of gunshots. [as received]

Nine Austrians among a group of 18 tourists were hurt in the incident along with the driver and the tourist guide.

Eight civilians were also wounded chasing the perpetrators, who opened fire indiscriminately as they escaped.

The wounded were taken to the al-Nil University Hospital at al-Qasr al-'Ayni and the Dar al-Salam Hospital. Criminal laboratory experts under the command of Major General Husayn Tawfiq, Interior Ministry officials, and criminal investigation officials went to the scene to investigate.

[In a related report, Paris AFP in English at 0849 GMT on 27 December adds the following: "Suspected Muslim fundamentalists wounded nine Austrian holidaymakers in an attack on a tour bus here on Monday [27 December], police said.

["The attack took place in an old district in the south of the city."]

Search for 'Criminals' Affirmed

NC2712105093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1015 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—Major General 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Nahhas, first assistant interior minister for security affairs, has affirmed that searches are going on and investigations being conducted into the background of the criminals who attacked a tourist bus in the Cairo district of Misr al-Qadimah this morning.

Maj. Gen. Nahhas said they are now tracking down the criminals, who escaped. He said they can't escape the grip of justice.

Eyewitnesses in the area of the incident noted that three people perpetrated the crime, one of them masked. They were carrying machine guns and pistols, which they used to shoot citizens, terrorizing them when they tried to confront and chase them.

Witnesses said the criminals laid an ambush for the tourist bus. One of them threw an explosive device at the bus, shattering the front, back, and side windscreens of the vehicle. But the driver did not stop and sped away from the scene.

Eyewitnesses also affirmed that the three criminals fled through a side street leading to the Corniche Road.

Interior Ministry To Make Statement

NC2712110193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1025 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—A responsible security source at the Interior Ministry has stated that at around 0830 today, unknown gunmen fired on a minibus driving down a street in the Misr al-Qadimah district [of Cairo].

The vehicle belongs to the Express Travel Company and was carrying a group of Austrian holidaymakers. Six of the occupants were wounded and taken to al-Qasr al-'Ayni Hospital. Investigations are under way to determine their identities and the extent of their injuries. The perpetrators got away.

The source said officials from the Interior Ministry, Cairo Security Department, and various investigation departments and experts from the criminal laboratory arrived at the scene immediately to examine any evidence.

The Interior Ministry will issue a statement on the details and effects of the incident.

[In a related report, Paris AFP in English at 1026 GMT on 27 December adds the following: "Suspected Islamic militants wounded eight Austrian holidaymakers in a gun and bomb attack on a tour bus on Monday, and shot another eight people who chased them, police and diplomats said.

["Three of the Austrians were in serious condition, including one with serious eye injuries, while eight passers-by who tried to catch the attackers suffered varying degrees of bullet wounds.

["Witnesses said four militants rode up on bicycles as the bus with 16 Austrians on board was pulling away from the 'Amr Ibn al-'Ass mosque, the city's oldest.

["The assailants opened fire and threw a bomb, then escaped after turning their guns on local people who gave chase, police said.

["The attack took place in the Misr al-Qadimah district, a popular tourist destination."]

Al-Alfi Vows To Uproot 'Terrorists'

NC2712164793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1600 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi stressed that security officials will continue to pursue the terrorist outlaws until they are uprooted and the country is rid of them.

In a statement today, the minister said the attack on a tourist bus that took place this morning confirms that these terrorists have lost their affiliation with the homeland. He added that the terrorist actions of the outlaws are more against the people of Egypt than against the tourists who visit the country. He stressed that the terrorists' actions have no objective other than impeding Egypt's economic achievements.

Government Rewards Citizens for Information on 'Terrorists'

NC2512175893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1615 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 25 Dec (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has stressed that whoever gives any information leading to the discovery of terrorists will be immediately rewarded. A small piece of information that may appear insignificant to citizens may lead to important positive results for the security agencies, he said.

Speaking after honoring three citizens who helped in the arrest of terrorist Sayyid Salah Sayyid Sulayman, who is

suspected in the unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi, the minister praised the positive contribution of the Egyptian public. He said that the successful efforts of security forces at this stage depend on cooperation from the public.

Al-Alfi said the enlightened Egyptian masses have realized that confronting the challenges facing the homeland requires unity against all criminal attempts against the security of the country and the safety of the citizens.

[In a Cairo-datelined report, Paris AFP in English at 1642 GMT adds: "Three informers on Saturday [25 December] shared a reward of 30,000 dollars for the arrest of nine suspects in the attempted assassination of Egypt's Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi."]

Security Forces Discover Arms Manufacturing Workshops

NC2612163893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1520 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 26 Dec (MENA)—Security men this week arrested a number of elements engaged in unlawful acts, including a gang specializing in manufacturing weapons and selling them at exorbitant prices.

Major General Mahmud Wajdi, director of the Cairo Investigation Administration, has stated that the elements were arrested as part of the campaigns ordered by Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi to root out any activity emanating from the slums to disrupt public order. He added that during these campaigns, two workshops for manufacturing weapons in the al-Sharrabiyah and Shubra al-Khaymah Districts of Cairo had been uncovered where 19 firearms and 150 types of weapons—including knives, metal bars, and daggers—were found. [passage omitted]

Libya

Al-Muntasir Denies Role in al-Kikhya Kidnapping

NC2312184193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1415 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Dec (MENA)—'Umar al-Muntasir, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for External Liaison and International Cooperation (foreign minister), accused some foreign parties of involvement in the kidnapping of Mansur al-Kikhya, former Libyan foreign minister, in Cairo.

Speaking at a news conference he held in Tripoli on 23 December that was attended by a number of Arab and foreign correspondents, al-Muntasir said that there are several parties, including the CIA, that might have had a role in this incident. He added that his country has nothing to do with the incident and denied that al-Kikhya is in Libya.

He expressed his belief that the investigations will prove that there are secret groups that harbor ill-will toward Egypt.

Al-Muntasir reiterated Libya's denial of aiding any terrorist organization. He said: The Western intelligence services themselves could be the ones helping these organizations. He also denied that any coup attempts have taken place in Libya. He said that these are only rumors and that there are some spies who have contacted the CIA but there was no military rebellion.

On the presence of chemical weapons in Tarhunah in Libya, the official said that there are no chemical weapons in Libya, adding that some foreign ambassadors and missions have visited the site and found only irrigation and water projects.

He stressed that there are no blemishes [khalfiyat sayyi'ah] on his country's relations with the U.S. Administration and called on the media not to harm these relations so that there can be future discusssions with the U.S. Administration.

On the Lockerbie crisis, al-Muntasir reiterated his country's position that the two suspects will not be extradited unless they themselves do so voluntarily. He said that handing over the suspects to the United States or Britain is not compatible with Libyan law.

Discusses Lockerbie, Sanctions

LD2412103293 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0730 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Tripoli, 24 December, JANA—Brother 'Umar al-Muntasir, the secretary of the People's Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation Bureau, held a news conference here that was attended by a large number of journalists and Arab and international news agencies. He responded to their different questions and clarified a number of issues related to the Great Jamahiriyah's policy.

Brother 'Umar al-Muntasir said the Great Jamahiriyah wanted to clarify the truth of what was called the Lockerbie case. He indicated that the Great Jamahiriyah had repeatedly invited a UN committee to come to the Great Jamahiriyah to conduct investigations into the case, but the three countries involved would not make a decision on the matter because they knew that Libya was innocent of the charges. He stated that this case had become concentrated on a number of [words indistinct] and the aim of escalating this crisis was to cover up other issues.

He pointed out the suffering of the Arab Libyan people as a result of the mandatory sanctions imposed on the Jamahiriyah and said that one of the results of these measures was the Libyan plane crash, Flight 1103, which killed 157 people of different nationalities. In addition, many had lost their lives on the road to Tunisia, and the Libyan people had incurred excessive injuries as a result of economic losses sustained.

He said the Jamahiriyah had offered several solutions and proposals before Resolution 883, but the three countries have not paid any attention to or shown appreciation for these positive proposals.

Brother al-Muntasir added: Before the beginning of this month, efforts were exerted by the Arab Maghreb Union, as well as by Egypt, which proposed that the suspects stand trial in a Scottish court without interference from the British Government. The Vatican also exerted efforts to find a just solution to this case. He stated that the two suspects had refused to hand themselves over, saying they would not get a fair trial. Libyan law does not allow extradition, and if that should happen, it would be against Libyan law.

He stated that humanitarian organizations and world governments had denounced the UN measures against Libya and said: We are innocent of these charges.

Brother al-Muntasir urged the media not to insult the merits of democracy in America so that there may be an opening for discussion.

Concerning the undeclared objectives of the coercive sanctions imposed on the Great Jamahiriyah, Brother al-Muntasir stressed that the insistence on ignoring international law makes us aware that there are other objectives for these measures, particularly because the international community knows that our relations with America were good—and also with Britain—despite the embargo, as there was wide trade cooperation between Libya and both these countries.

He explained that Libya has no special animosity, but all of this was a result of its stances vis-a-vis the issues of liberation in the world. He pointed out that the Palestinian issue will be resolved and the Soviet Union is finished; they used to say that Libya was an arsenal of Soviet weapons. There are neither Soviet weapons in Libya nor nuclear weapons nor foreign bases, therefore, Libya has no animosity toward anybody.

In his news conference, Brother al-Muntasir stressed: We have no knowledge about the disappearance of the person called al-Kikhya, pointing out that the investigation will reveal this question and that we have great confidence in the Egyptian security services, as it is said that he disappeared in Egypt.

Concerning the existence of nuclear weapons in Libya in the Tarhunah area, Brother al-Muntasir made it clear that the ambassadors accredited to Libya had visited that site and were certain that it has nothing to do with nuclear weapons and that it is geared for irrigation and agriculture.

Brother al-Muntasir renewed the emphasis on Libya's innocence of the charges in the so-called Lockerbie issue, pointing out that the Great Jamahiriyah had repeatedly attempted to contact the United States, but it had closed the door to Libyan attempts to find a solution to this issue. He explained that Libya is an Islamic state, applying Islamic law without extremism, saying: We reject the extreme Islamic fundamentalism.

He also stressed that there is no power struggle in Libya. There are no parties, but there is a people that governs itself through people's congresses that make decisions and people's committees that implement them. In this way the struggle for power has been settled in Libya.

He pointed out that relations with Egypt are always based on cooperation in the various fields. He also explained that Libya had applied the principle of reciprocity towards the states that implemented the imposed measures and expelled a number of Libyan diplomats accredited to their countries.

About the outcome of the his meetings with the Iranian foreign minister, he explained that they had discussed bilateral relations and the issues of mutual interest. He called on the Arab countries to intensify and rally their efforts to face up to the humiliation to which the Arab nation is exposed.

Reports on Talks With Egypt's al-Baz Denied

LD2512220693 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 2020 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Tripoli, 25 Dec (JANA)—A source at the General People's Committee for Unity denied reports circulated by some mass media on the recent (?visit) to the Great Jamahiriyah by Dr. 'Usamah al-Baz, first under secretary at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry and director of the Egyptian president's office for political affairs.

The source confirmed that these reports were [word sindistinct] untrue, and (?consequently) the mass media reports circulated about the issues discussed within this sphere were baseless.

As for the Lockerbie issue, the source said that Libya has nothing to say, particularly [words indistinct] Libya's innocence in it.

In connection with the so-called al-Kikhya issue, the source added that Libya had nothing to do with it, and it looks as if he were a victim of a vendetta from (?quarters) of the stray dogs he dealt with. He was a foreign national, and his connection with Libya was severed years ago. He was not of Libyan origin but from a Turkish family that had settled in Libya. We thought he had gone back to his country after the establishment of (?people's) power in Libya and after the people started to govern themselves, especially as he was from a family [words indistinct] which controlled the Libyan people [words indistinct].

Egyptian Physicians Contracts Terminated

NC2412191893 Cairo MENA in English 1748 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Tripoli, Dec. 24 (MENA)—Libyan authorities have decided to terminate the contracts of some 3,000

general practitioners and cited plans to replace the lot by Libyan graduates majoring in the same field.

MENA learned the decision will include some 25 dentists, 25 pharmacists. Ninety per cent of the laid off are Egyptians while the rest belong to other nationalities.

A few months ago, Libyan authorities have terminated contracts of several thousands of Egyptian teachers for same reason.

Sudan

Sources Assail U.S. Embassy's 'Provocation'

NC2712091993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0900 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 27 Dec (MENA)—Sudanese diplomatic sources have criticized what they called provocation by the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, which presented awards to the families of Sudanese citizens in appreciation of their efforts during the U.S. humanitarian aid operations, despite a Sudanese criminal court condemning these activities.

The official newspaper AL-INQADH AL-WATANI cited the sources as saying that the Sudanese Government does not want to respond to the U.S. provocation and has agreed to form a committee to discuss the trial's legal procedures.

National Assembly Praises Ties

EA2212194093 Omdurman National Unity Radio in English 1500 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Excerpt] The Transitional National Assembly [TNA] in its session yesterday hailed Sino-Sudanese relations and China's positive responses towards the Sudan. The TNA, chaired by the speaker, Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, approved its economic affairs committee's report on a deal [as heard] on the endorsement of the Sino-Sudanese economic, commercial and technical cooperation. It was presented by the head of the committee, Badr al-Din Sulayman. Sulayman also reviewed Chinese support for Sudan in international forums, pointing to China's stances towards Sudan in the United Nations.

Tunisia

President Ben Ali Meets French Defense Minister Leotard

LD2312224393 Tunis RTT Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Excerpt] At Cartharge Palace this morning President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received French Minister of State and Defense Minister Francois Leotard, who is currently on an official visit to Tunisia. After the meeting, attended by National Defense Minister Abdelaziz Ben Dhia, Mr. Leotard told correspondents that he first had the chance to meet President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali two years ago. He indicated that he reviewed with the president a number of issues related to ties between the two countries.

He said ties are excellent and exemplary. The French minister of state said he wanted to express to President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali France's admiration for Tunisia's policy, which is open, stable, and peaceful, and he said it is an example throughout the Mediterranean region.

He added that: As a Mediterranean, I expressed to the president the appreciation we have in France and beyond for the policies he is pursuing. He indicated that he discussed a number of issues with the president, including international and bilateral topics. At the end of his statement, the French minister expressed his deepest hopes that these ties will grow steadily, particularly in the security and defense spheres. He stressed that the next few years will witness a development in those matters. [passage omitted]

Defense Minister Meets Leotard

LD2312192093 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] This morning at the ministry's headquarters, National Defense Minister Abdelaziz Ben Dhia reviewed with Francois Leotard, the French minister of state for defense, various aspects of Tunisian-French cooperation, particularly in the defense field.

They agreed to further develop this cooperation so that it may reach the level of cordial and ideal relations existing between the two countries.

Abdelaziz Ben Dhia and Francois Leotard signed an agreement on principles regarding cooperation between the two ministries in the field of remote sensing. For his part, and on behalf of the French Government, Francois Leotard handed Abdelaziz Ben Dhia a picture of an area in Tunisia taken via the French satellite SPOT.

Bahrain

Central Bank Criticizes U.S. Freeze on Assets

NC2412150993 Paris AFP in English 1348 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Manama, Dec 24 (AFP)—Bahrain's central bank has criticized the U.S. authorities for freezing assets held by a Bahraini bank with Libyan connections, the English-language GULF DAILY NEWS reported here Friday [24 December].

The Bahrain Monetary Agency said the Bahrain-based Arab Financial Services (AFS) Bank had to halt the sale of its U.S. dollar travellers cheques due to the freeze on the bank's assets in the United States. The U.S. action was taken because it was alleged AFS was owned or controlled by Libyans.

However, in a statement issued Thursday the central bank said: "In the opinion of the Bahraini authorities, this explanation is not factually correct since AFS is only 11.26 percent owned by the Libyan Government." Citing an AFS spokesman, it said the company was negotiating with the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) in a bid to get the freeze reversed.

The U.S. action, taken on December 17, was in line with tougher international sanctions against Libya for its refusal to hand over two Libyan suspects wanted in connection with the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, that killed 270 people.

The central bank said some Libyan nationals served on the AFS board of directors and executive committee, but they neither constituted a majority nor exercised control. It said Bahrain would continue to put its case to the U.S. authorities and the freeze served only to damage holders of U.S. travellers cheques issued by AFS.

The Bahraini authorities took steps to ensure that from December 1, when the new U.N. sanctions against Libya went into effect, all banks and financial institutions complied with the provisions of U.N. Security Council resolution 883. The new sanctions came on top of an economic and air embargo slapped on Tripoli in April 1992. Bahrain is a key Gulf banking center, serving as headquarters to 70 banks and financial institutions, most of them offshore operations.

Kuwait

Trial of Bush's Alleged Assassins Postponed

NC2512085093 Paris AFP in English 0832 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Kuwait City, Dec 25 (AFP)—The Kuwaiti State Security Court on Saturday [25 December] postponed indefinitely its verdict in the trial of 11 Iraqis and three Kuwaitis accused of plotting to kill former U.S. President George Bush during a visit he paid to the emirate in April.

Presiding Judge Salah al-Fahd said the court decided to recall the chief prosecution witness, Kuwaiti intelligence officer 'Abd-al-Samad al-Shatti, at a session set for February 5. Al-Shatti would be called on to "clarify the roles of the accused," al-Fahd said.

The verdict in the trial, which opened on June 5, was originally due to be issued on Saturday, having already been postponed from the end of October. In June Prosecutor General Badr Mas'ad demanded the death penalty for all 11 Iraqis and one of the Kuwaitis, and 10-year prison terms for the other two Kuwaitis.

Of the 14 defendants only two Iraqis—Ra'd 'Abd-al-Amir al-Asadi and Wali 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Ghazali—have acknowledged links with the Iraqi intelligence service. Another defendant confessed to having transported explosives into Kuwaiti territory, but said he did not know about any plot to assassinate Bush. All the rest denied any involvement in the plot or links with Iraq.

The 14 suspects, arrested a few days after Bush's visit to Kuwait in April, are charged with planning to carry out a car-bomb attack against the former president, on the orders of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn's intelligence service. Baghdad has denied any involvement in the affair.

Following an investigation by the U.S. intelligence services into the plot, the United States launched a cruise missile attack on the Iraqi intelligence headquarters in Baghdad on June 27. Iraq said six people were killed in the attack. During the Bush administration U.S.-led multinational coalition forces drove Iraqi troops out of Kuwait after a seven-month occupation, in February 1991.

Qatar

Turkish Foreign Minister Affirms Gulf Security

TA2712095493 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 0800 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Announcer-read report over still of Foreign Minister Cetin]

[Text] Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin has stated that the Gulf countries should resolve their differences peacefully through dialogue in order to safeguard the region's peace, security, and stability.

Cetin travelled from Cairo to Doha on an official visit and, in a statement to the QATARI NEWS AGENCY, Cetin said Turkey accords great importance to the Gulf's peace, security, and stability.

According to information released by ANATOLIA AGENCY, Cetin pointed out that Turkey is ready to expand relations with Gulf countries with the aim of contributing to the region's peace and stability.

Explaining that there are no problems in Qatari-Turkish relations, Cetin added that this visit will expand those relations. Noting that both countries are trying to promote bilateral economic and commercial cooperation, Cetin pointed out that the region has great potential that can be used to the economic advantage of both countries.

Cetin, who will continue his contacts in Doha this morning, will be received by Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, the emir of Qatar.

Yemen

Presidential Council Discusses Military Issues

JN2312142193 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] The Presidential Council met under brother Presidential Council Chairman Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih at noon today. The conferees discussed a host of issues and topics related to building the state and operating and activating its agencies, enabling them to assume their trade, economic, development, technical, and other responsibilities.

The Presidential Council examined various domestic developments regarding the repercussions of the current political crisis. The Presidential Council expressed satisfaction with the moves made to halt the repercussions of the crisis in terms of the irresponsible media vituperations and campaigns, which will harm the interests of both the homeland and the people. It affirmed the need for all to assume their national responsibilities regarding the ongoing dialogue on resolving the crisis in a positive atmosphere that will promote trust and understanding and ensure success.

The Presidential Council also examined military issues. In today's session, the Presidential Council endorsed a moratorium on any fresh military transfers, appointments, suspensions, or promotions within the Armed Forces, unless the Presidential Council and the Higher National Defense Council give their approval in accordance with the relevant constitutional provisions. Any new military measures must also be endorsed by the two councils.

The Presidential Council also addressed the economic situation in the country. It affirmed that the government must give serious attention to the economic situation to identify proper measures for improving the economic situation and the citizens' livelihood. The council instructed the government to take the necessary measures to unshackle all activities of the national economy, encourage domestic and foreign investment and to reassure Yemenis at home and abroad, who are maintaining foreign accounts, that they have the right to move invest them in total freedom in all economic and trade activities. They must be granted sufficient guarantees in this regard.

The Presidential Council decided to hold an expanded meeting with the Council of Ministers on 29 December to examine the current political crisis and the economic and supply situation in the country.

In a related development, the Presidential Council was apprised of the contents of the message to the brother Presidential Council chairman from Russian President Boris Yeltsin. In his message, President Yeltsin affirmed Russia's support for unity and democracy in our country and expressed Russia's desire to promote friendly bilateral ties. The council expressed satisfaction with this position.

The council was also briefed on the contents of a message from Eritrean President Isais Afewerki to the brother Presidential Council chairman on Eritrea's efforts to help resolve the political crisis in our country.

The council also addressed various other issues and topics listed on its agenda and adopted the proper decisions on them.

Salih Thanks King Husayn for Peace Efforts

JN2512202493 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Dec 93

["Exclusive" interview with President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih by Sa'd al-Bazzaz in Sanaa; date not given—broadcast in progress]

[Text] ['Ali 'Abdallah Salih] ...then this regrettable crisis happened. We are exerting efforts with all political parties and all of our partners in unity and democracy to contain this crisis. We must also exert efforts to end this crisis and its negative consequences, which are harming Yemen's reputation, unity, and democracy. We are joined by many unionists who are cooperating to contain this regrettable crisis.

[Sa'd al-Bazzaz] And are you optimistic, Mr. President?

[Salih] Yes I am optimistic. God willing, the new year will be a year of security, stability, and tranquility in which the crisis and all the negative consequences of from the absence of unity in the past are terminated.

[Al-Bazzaz] Mr. President, you know that unity is not only a Yemeni issue, but an Arab, regional, and international issue. How do you assess Arab and world attitudes toward unity? Are you satisfied with the Arab and world attitude toward unity which you observed during the transitional phase?

[Salih] In fact, you can say that the entire Arab nation supports this unity. If there is some lack of enthusiasm in certain parts, this may be due to the consequences of the Gulf crisis, which caused cracks to appear and harmed inter-Arab ties. This applies to the Arab nation. We are certain that the entire Arab homeland supported unity and views it with appreciation and pride. The same case applies to all unionists in the Arab and Muslim worlds. On the world level, the international or foreign support has been remarkable, from the beginning during this crisis.

[Al-Bazzaz] Mr. President, returning to Arab interest in the Yemeni question and the preservation of unity. His Majesty King Husayn has played an distinguished role in this field and sent the chief of the Royal Court to you twice in an attempt to do what he could to preserve Yemeni unity. How do you view Jordanian efforts?

[Salih] First, it was not unusual for my dear brother His Majesty King Husayn to exert such efforts. We have special and fraternal links with him. We also have warm Arab links with him and ties of brotherhood, friendship, and love between us and him on a personal level and between us and the brothers in fraternal Jordan. King Husayn is following this crisis and has sent letters to me personally and to brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid. He and Jordan have shown an interest in resolving problems through brotherly means and in preserving Yemeni unity, which is seen as a beacon at this time when Arab solidarity is suffering such cracks. He has shown great concern, and in the letters he sent to us he voiced his and the Jordanian people's interest in seeing the problems between the Yemenis resolved through peaceful means. He also said that he is prepared, if asked, to help resolve this crisis. We greatly appreciate this attitude. I sent him a reply message to the effect that we could never do without the efforts of King Husayn in view of the special place he has in my heart and the heart of the Yemeni people. We could never do without his efforts and contributions to resolve this crisis. We feel, however, that we do not want to embarrass him or burden him with these problems. So, let the dialogue committee and the parties of the coalition start work on bringing views closer. Then His Majesty King Husayn can be informed of the results to bless this meeting and to contribute to the final touches to restore (?understanding) among the brothers.

We hope that the press and parties will behave the way fraternal Jordan has. We are satisfied with the Jordanian experience and democracy in Jordan. Democracy in Jordan is not unregulated democracy, but responsible and logical democracy. We hope that we can learn from each other. There is nothing wrong with learning from any successful experience, but unregulated democracy and lack of any constraints have harmed us and harmed democracy, pluralism, and free expression though the press.

Salih Proposes Meeting With Al-Bid

JN2512215793 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, along with Council member brother 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zindani today received a delegation of their eminences the 'ulema who took part in a gathering of the Society of Yemeni 'Ulema which convened in Sanaa from 20 to 23 December.

The brother 'ulema presented to the brother president the statement issued by the Yemeni 'ulema setting forth their perception of the current developments on the national scene and the way out of the political crisis. In their statement, they called on brothers Lt. Gen. 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and his deputy, 'Ali Salim al-Bid, to set a meeting at the Grand Mosque within two weeks in al-Janad in Ta'izz Governorate. The 'ulema chose the place and time to correspond with the place and time Mu'ath Bin-Jabal arrived at a messenger from the greatest Prophet. The 'ulema said they wanted this meeting to be an opportunity for a candid exchange of views to attain Yemeni unity and interests.

At the meeting, a number of the 'ulema spoke with the president, including brother Judge Muhammad Ismail al-Hajji, the president of the Society of Yemeni 'Ulema, and head of the Supreme Court of the republic. They stressed the necesssity for maintaining Yemen's unity and for rejectiang disunity. The 'ulema also underlined the need for the legislature to assume its responsibilities in passing laws and monitoring the executive branch. They also called for the armed and security forces to remain neutral, avoid political disputes and party affiliations, and safeguard national unity and national achievements. They urged the government to devise a plan that will ensure a consolidation of national unity, the gradual promotion of local government, and the proper solution for economic problems and better living conditions. They stressed the need to find answers to problems underlying the crisis in a responsible spirit that puts national interest above all other considerations.

Speaking to the gathering, the chairman of the Presidential Council welcomed them in his name and on behalf of brother members of the Council. He commended the outcome of their gathering, saying: I thank you for your noble gesture, the result of the meeting that brought together 'ulema from the Republic's governorates. We trust that our brother 'ulema's confidence will prove to be well placed. We concur with all the decisions that you made and are prepared to act to meet them.

Regarding the proposal for a meeting between myself and brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, I am willing to agree. I would rather have the meeting take place on 9 January 1994 to coincide with the anniversary of al-Isra' wa-al-Mi'raj [Muhammad's nocturnal journey to heaven]. We trust that the proposed date will prove acceptable to brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid and that the session will help bridge views and lift us from this crisis. We promise, as enjoined by our true Islamic faith, to advance a closure of ranks and place our country's national interests above all other considerations. In their attainment of unity, our people did a remarkable job. It would be disgraceful for us to let things lapse into what they were before 22 May 1990.

Unity was realized along with the option of shura and democracy. If differences of opinion emerged, all the parties must reason their way out free from overzealousness. He indicated that there is no such thing as an unsolvable problem and that the questions that were raised by the Yemeni Socialist Party within the framework of the dialogue committee have been addressed by

seeking a solution to the problem and safeguarding national unity and ending the current state of affairs.

The brother president urged the 'ulema to assume their religious and national duties by showing the people the road to justice and virtue, amity and solidarity. He noted that the 'ulema have a noble message for the community and that their unity is an imporant gain for the nation, because they represent the strength of society. [passage omitted]

States Conditions for Meeting

JN2612210893 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, Presidential Council vice chairman, this evening received a delegation of their eminences the 'ulema who took part in the meeting of the Society of Yemeni 'Ulema, which convened in Sanaa from 20 to 23 December.

The brother 'ulema presented to brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid a letter and a statement issued by the meeting. They also briefed him on the outcome of that meeting and the view of the 'ulema on practical solutions to the current political crisis.

The letter of the 'ulema contained an invitation to brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, Presidential Council vice chairman, to meet with his brother 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman, on 9 January 1994 in al-Janad Mosque in Ta'izz to discuss the crisis and find solutions to it.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid welcomed the 'ulema's initiative and said he is prepared to meet with brother 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman, if action is taken to begin implementing the 18 points that were proposed by the Yemeni Socialist Party and accepted by the brother Presidential Council chairman and the leadership of the General People's Congress.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid praised the efforts of the 'ulema, which will strengthen their role, together with that of the other national and social forces that seek to find solutions to the current political crisis. He urged the 'ulema to say what is right and exert further efforts. He also urged them to shoulder their national and religious duty to educate the citizens, guide them on the right path, and create a spirit of love among citizens to check divisionist tendencies, protect unity against the perils of division, and heal wounds.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid noted some wrong practices and conduct. He said those who entrench wrong practices are the people who harm unity. He stressed that divisive methods should not be cloaked by the pure veils of legitimacy.

He stressed the need to abide by the agreements and follow the general course of democracy and not to drift behind what the forces hostile to unity, democracy, and modernization seek to achieve. These forces, he said, are seeking to push the country into the furnace of a destructive conflict.

Al-Bid stressed the need to use logic when addressing problems and to continue the serious and constructive dialogue to help find solutions to the crisis. He explained that the Yemeni Socialist Party, which was a principal partner in achieving unity, will not spare any effort to help preserve this national achievement.

Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, Presidential Council vice chairman, also referred to phenomenon of terrorism and violence. He stressed the need to arrest the perpetrators of murder and bring them to trial and remove the camps from the capital and major cities in implementation of the unity agreements. Al-Bid stressed the need to curtail rigid centralism and said centralism has harmed unity. [passage omitted]

'Arafat Arrives, Comments on Talks With Israel

JN2712093493 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0900 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Sanaa, 27 Dec (WAKH)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, accompanied by a delegation, arrived in Sanaa today on a visit to Yemen for talks with the political leadership and senior officials.

On his arrival, 'Arafat told reporters he will brief Yemeni officials on latest Palestinian developments in light of the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations to implement the agreement signed in September in Washington, as well as obstacles to these negotiations.

The Palestinian president pointed out that the main obstacle is Israel's interpretation of some points of the Declaration of Principles, including the size of Jericho, the crossings, and the Jerusalem area—in addition to Israel's continued isolation of the city of Jerusalem and the brutal suppression and terrorism against the Palestinian citizens by Jewish settlers and Israeli occupation troops.

Official Source Denies Incident With U.S. Patrol

JN2312171093 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Dec (INA)—An official source in Baghdad today denied allegations by an official at the U.S. Department of State that an armed incident occurred between a U.S. patrol and Iraqi troops in the northern region of Iraq.

In a statement to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY, the source said this claim is fabricated and untrue.

Official Warns King Fahd, Gulf Leaders

JN2312183793 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] At the conclusion of the Gulf Cooperation Council summit, Nuri Najm al-Marsumi, under secretary of the Iraqi Culture and Information Ministry, has warned Saudi King Fahd and the other Arab leaders in the Gulf against the dangers of continuing the policy of hostility toward the Iraqi people. In an article published in BABIL, al-Marsumi added that the policy of hostility toward Iraq will not achieve security, stability, and peace in the region or to its leaders. On the contrary, he said, this policy will inflame conflicts and wars.

Switzerland, Spain, Greece, Austria Release Assets

JN2712081993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0735 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 27 Dec (INA)—Four European countries have released Iraqi assets that have been frozen in their banks since the 30-state aggression against Iraq. AL-JUMHURIYAH announced this today, saying that it was officially informed that Switzerland, Spain, Greece, and Austria have indeed released Iraq's frozen assets. AL-JUMHURIYAH learned that these states took this step after receiving the approval of their monetary authorities.

Saddam's Christmas Message to Iraqis, Arabs

JN2412202893 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 24 Dec 93

["Text" of Christmas message from President Saddam Husayn; read by Culture and Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi—live or recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. From Saddam Husayn to our great people and glorious Arab nation, particularly the Christians among them, as well as to all the men of honor throughout the world. The birthdays of prophets have always reminded us, and still remind us, of lofty values. They are an opportunity for us to meditate upon virtues and the duties of strugglers and mujahidin toward merciful God, toward man, and toward life. Thus is the birthday of Jesus Christ, the anniversary of peace and the glorious new year. Prompted by these noble values and all the values they inspire, I extend my warmest greetings and best wishes, and beseech Almighty God that with Christmas 1994, Iraq and our glorious nation, and the entire world community, will have attained all the well-being, dignity, progress, security, stability, and peace for which they yearn. I trust that the new year and all subsequent years will see love, peace, justice, equality and their sponsors prevail over all the forces of injustice, coercion, and aggression. I trust that the dignified heads of Iraqis shall remain held high, crowned with wreaths of victory and supported by a wealth of faith that will prove too strong for aggressors against rights.

Brothers and friends, for more than three years now, our patient people have been on the receiving end of the ugliest crime of its kind—a crime unprecedented in contemporary history. Supported by those who accepted or obeyed their orders from among the wicked of the region and those whose faith and resolve are weak, the international wrongdoers imposed their iniquitous blockade of mujahid Iraq and their 30-state oppressive aggression. They withheld food and medicine from infants, the sick, and the elderly. They sought to destroy the symbols of awakening, progress, and science that Iraq has attained with the aim of taking Iraq back to an era of darkness, ignorance, poverty, dependence, and drift, after your great revolution carried the country with rapid progress to preeminent standing and a well-deserved place with the influence that matches Iraq's history and civilization, dating back thousands of years.

Equipped by all that which is inspired by evil minds and failed illusions, and pushed into such dark abysses by the United States and Zionism, the evil ones tried to infringe on our sovereignty and harm our dignity, thinking that they could make Iraq submit to their evil will and humiliate it. They are damned, and God is great.

Brothers and friends, the people of Iraq stood fast against a most tyrannical aggression. With a unique spirit of jihad, they have been facing the blockade of the tyrannical ones for more than three years now. They have passed the test, the calamity, and troubles in the most serious chapters of the past. They have rebuilt what the evil ones have destroyed. With a legendary spirit, which bewildered the world, the aggressive powers, and their unjust blockade, they dug out rivers, built bridges, and reclaimed more land. More importantly, the flame of belief in God and the need to rise to a higher status are increasing, prompting further desires to achieve what is loftier and more advanced. Consequently, our noble people have won appreciation, praise, and admiration from friends in all parts of the world. They have deserved to be respected, even by the unwilling enemies.

O Iraqi people, the most difficult time is over, and there only remains one round, which you are qualified to complete before our people, God willing, can achieve the virtue and progress they aspire for in the present and the future. We have great confidence in our people. We are confident that the clear and decisive victory is definitely

coming, with God's help, as a testimony from history, our nation, and all virtuous people of the world on the last chapters of the jihad action, the relentless patience, and the ambition to move forward.

I congratulate you again and beseech Almighty God to grant our people and the children of our glorious Arab nation and all of mankind goodness, happiness, and permanent festivals and to spare humanity the evil actions of the evil ones, the injustice of the tyrannical, and the plots of the plotters.

They are plotting a scheme, and I am planning a scheme. Grant a delay to the unbelievers; give respite to them for a while. [Koranic verses] Many happy returns. God's blessings and peace be upon you.

[signed] Saddam Husayn

[dated] 11 Rajab al-Khayr 1414 hegira, corresponding to 24 December 1993

High-Ranking Officers Reportedly Executed

NC2312185093 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] The ruling regime in Baghdad has executed Brigadier General Tawfiq Jasim al-Yasiri from al-Diwaniyah. The 'Aflaqi authorities also executed Staff Major General Amir Jasim al-Hilu, brother of Samir Jasim al-Hilu. Samir al-Hilu was recently executed following the recent coup attempt.

According to reliable sources, the Baghdad regime arrested Shaykh Ahmad Khalaf al-Jaburi in Mosul for opposing the regime. The sources said that antiregime leaflets were distributed at the [words indistinct] camp last week. The leaflets called on the Army to stop serving the dictator in Baghdad and implementing the regime's policies, which are hostile to the oppressed Iraqi people.

Council Urges End to Inter-Kurdish Fighting

JN2412165993 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] A number of Islamic scholars from Irbil visited the Political Bureau of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK] and denounced the current situation. They called for expeditious efforts in order to control the situation. During that meeting, the Presidential Council of the Region of Iraqi Kurdistan issued the following call:

A call from the region's Presidential Council to the Political Bureaus of the DPK and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, the political bureaus of other parties in the Kurdistan Front, and the Political Bureau of the Islamic Movement in Iraqi Kurdistan and all its centers and branches:

In the interest of the people of Kurdistan, we urge you to stop fighting immediately. We are waiting for the arrival of the representative of the Political bureau of the Islamic Movement's in order to implement the resolutions of the region's government to end this deteriorating situation.

Barzani Radio Comments on Clashes, Infighting

JN2412175993 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1545 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Station commentary: "Clashes and Infighting Do Not Serve Our Kurdish People's Legitimate Cause"]

[Text] A state of confusion and instability prevailed in many beloved Kurdish cities and villages in mid-December creating a miserable situation in these cities and villages.

On 18 December, clashes began in the city of Kifri between the peshmerga of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] and the Islamic Movement of Iraqi Kurdistan. On the following day, the clashes spread to Raniyah. As a result, many peshmerga forces and innocent people were killed or wounded.

On 20 December, the clashes spread to Chakurna, (?Katyawa), (?Saluchawa), Qal'at Dizah, Kou Senjaq, Shaqlawah, Harir, and Diyala. Consequently, even ordinary citizens faced serious danger. According to reports from these areas, markets, schools, and administrative organizations stopped work or are being run in an unorganized matter, and our citizens' security and stability are deteriorating.

In light of this situation, it was decided to stop the clashes between the forces of the allied PUK forces and the brothers in the Islamic Movement of Iraqi Kurdistan at midnight on 22-23 December. Thus our people were reassured.

We, the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK], exerted and are still exerting every effort to safeguard the security of the people of Kurdistan and to prevent their fragmentation. Any such fragmentation, God forbid, would create serious tragedy and pain for our people.

Regrettably, we heard about fresh clashes even before the ink on the agreement dried. Does this not show disrespect for our decisions and agreements and disregard for our national interests?

We say to our people, allies, and brothers that we are dutybound to resolve our differences through peaceful political dialogue, not by force. The use of force will further complicate the differences, will not be in the interest of any party, will undermine the legitimate cause of our people and our democratic experiment, and will fragment our people.

We appeal to all parties, particularly the honest sons of our people, to devote all efforts in order to end tension, enforce the laws of Kurdistan, and render the legitimate cause of our people a success.

PUK, DPK Sign 'Strategic Agreement'

NC2412174093 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Dec 93

["Text" of a "strategic agreement" between the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan and the Democratic Party of Kurdistan "to run the affairs of the Kurdistan region"; date not given]

[Text] Iraqi Kurdistan is passing through an extremely sensitive time. Our people have made national gains thanks to their struggle, the blood of virtuous martyrs, the sacrifices of their sons, and the major role played by the Iraqi Kurdistan Front, particularly the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] and the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK].

The [words indistinct] realize that the success of the experience of the democratic administration in Iraqi Kurdistan and the continued international understanding of the just cause of our people are basically based on preserving the unity of the Kurdish ranks and strengthening these ranks in the face of enemy attempts to rob our people of their freedom and national achievements. All this requires the unification of the political positions of both sides vis-a-vis all the internal and external challenges that threaten our fledgling experience. Both sides, therefore, decided to conclude this strategic agreement and to make serious efforts to implement its clauses.

I. The PUK and the DPK stress their fateful and strategic alliance to implement the agreement signed between brothers Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani on 2 September 1992. The two sides shall commit themselves to the results achieved by the dialogue committee drawn from the political bureaus of the two allied parties as the basis for the relationship between them. These results shall be considered part of this strategic agreement.

II. The leadership of the two parties emphasize the following principles:
1. Both sides shall join the parliament and the government on an equal basis. Important decisions shall be made and sensitive posts shall be filled through agreement between both sides. Appointments to other posts shall be based on equal opportunities, in which academic degrees, qualifications, and competence are taken into consideration.
2. Freedom shall be guaranteed for intellectual, political, party, democratic, and media work throughout Kurdistan, from [word indistinct] to Khanaqin, for all citizens in Iraqi Kurdistan, for political forces, and for Iraqi parties in accordance with the valid laws in the region. Political and organizational monopolies shall be banned from the region.
3. The differences between both sides and their organizations and bodies shall be resolved through political, peaceful, and fraternal means. Resorting to violence and weapons to resolve any differences is completely banned.
4. Both parties shall unify their political and practical positions—on the basis of consultations and friendly discussions—toward all Iraqi Kurdish parties. These positions shall be based on commitment to the sovereignty of law and order and respect for the democratic institutions in Kurdistan.
5. Both sides shall be committed to supporting the democratic and political inclinations of the Kurdish parties, noninterference in their internal affairs, and supporting the legitimate rights of the Kurdish people. Their position toward each party and group should take into consideration its legitimate interests.
6. Neither of the two parties shall ally itself with any one of these parties against the other party, and neither of them shall take serious stands without mutual consultations.
7. Both parties condemn terrorism, regardless of its source, and stress that the Kurdish people, as victims of terrorism, regard terrorism a deviation from their struggle and national traditions.

III.

A. A presidential council shall be formed from the two parties that will include brothers Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani, the brother Kurdistan National Assembly speaker, the brother prime minister of the region, and two members from each of the two parties' political bureaus.

B. The presidential council shall have the following prerogatives:
1. To exercise jurisdiction, as stipulated in Law No. 2 of the year 1991, until the completion of the second stage of electing the leader of the Kurdish liberation movement.
2. To supervise the two parties' blocs in the parliament and government.
3. To follow up the implementation of all the joint decisions taken by the two parties and the agreements concluded between them.

IV. The parliament shall exercise and perform its basic duties in full agreement between the speaker and his deputy and between the leaders of the two parties' blocs in it.

V. The government of the region of Kurdistan shall exercise and perform its basic duties and implement its ministerial program with the full agreement between the prime minister and his deputy and between the ministers and the under secretaries.

VI. The two parties agree on a united and joint policy toward those collaborating with the enemies against the region's security and safety.

VII. The two parties agree on a single, joint, and flexible policy toward the neighboring countries—especially Turkey, Iran, and Syria—in accordance with neighborly relations and the supreme interests of the region of Kurdistan.

VIII. The two parties agree on the method for allowing their members to move from one party to another but shall refuse to accept members who have been dismissed

or punished for moral reasons, theft, contacting hostile parties, or disobeying the government's orders.

IX. The two parties emphasize the need to impose the supremacy of law on everyone; to defend our people's achievements, especially the parliament and the government of the region; to respect human rights in Kurdistan; and to provide democratic rights and freedoms for all the citizens in Iraq. The two parties pledge to regard this as their sacred duty.

X. Brothers Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Talabani pledge personally and in the name of their two parties to supervise and implement this agreement and prevent deviations from its articles, clauses, and spirit.

[signed] Mas'ud Barzani, DPK leader

[signed] Jalal Talabani, PUK secretary general

Kurdish Parties Meet 24 Dec To Discuss Fighting

JN2512181393 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] A three-way meeting was held in Irbil 24 December to discuss ways to halt the fighting and clashes that have been raging for days between the peshmerga of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] and the Islamic League in Kurdistan.

The meeting was attended by Costras 'Abdallah Rasul, prime minister and member of the PUK Political Bureau; Dr. Rawj Nuri Shawij, deputy prime minister and member of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan Political Bureau; and Shaykh Muhammad Shanadari, member of the Political bureau of the Islamic League in Iraqi Kurdistan.

The meeting was specifically convened to discuss how to halt the fighting and end the clashes that have been going on in several areas of Kurdistan since 15 December. These clashes have caused anxiety in Kurdistan and many peshmerga from both sides, as well as defenseless citizens, have been killed or wounded.

The following points were discussed at the meeting: preventing clashes from spreading to major cities such as al-Sulaymaniyah and Irbil; exchanging prisoners; preventing illegal armed incursions in cities and villages; the need to abide by the law on arms when carrying weapons; and controlling areas where clashes have taken place by the unified army of the Kurdistan peshmerga.

Brother struggler Mas'ud Barzani, leader of our party, has exerted great efforts to end the fighting and tackle problems in a peaceful manner. It is hoped that fighting will be halted between both sides under the supervision of brother struggler Mas'ud Barzani, the leader of our party. An agreement will be signed on this issue to ease the situation in these cities and villages and to restore stability and normalcy to them in the service of our people's highest interests.

Rabin Warns Against Leaks of Secret Meetings

TA2412113193 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 24 Dec 93 p 2

[Report by Moti Bassok]

[Text] King Hassan of Morocco, Yasir 'Arafat, and senior PLO officials are angry that large portions of their secret talks with Jacques Neriya, Rabin's political adviser, have been leaked to the press.

Neriya was sent by Rabin to a meeting with Yasir 'Arafat in Tunis approximately two weeks ago. Last week he met King Hassan in Morocco. This last meeting was also attended by Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], the PLO's number two man.

Our correspondent has learned that King Hassan, 'Arafat, and other senior PLO officials have used their different channels to complain to Rabin that remarks they made in their meetings with Neriya, under the condition they would not be leaked to the press, were quoted by the Israeli press almost verbatim. The Palestinians also charged that it is hard to conduct secret negotiations with Israel because almost everything leaks out of the prime minister's bureau.

Several days ago Prime Minister Rabin convened a forum of senior officials negotiating with the Palestinians. Rabin warned the officials against leaks to the media. According to Rabin, many details of secret meetings and talks on the peace process have found their way to the local media.

Rabin Rejects Proposal for 'Second Stage' Talks

TA2412113793 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Dec 93 pp A1, A10

[Report by Ze'ev Schiff]

[Text] In the wake difficulties in implementing the first stage of the Gaza-Jericho First agreement between Israel and the PLO, the United States has proposed to Prime Minister Rabin—on behalf of the Palestinians—to start negotiations on the second stage of the agreement. During this stage Israel is slated to transfer Civil Administration powers to the Palestinians in the West Bank, to permit the Palestinians to start establishing a police force there, and to redeploy the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] outside densely populated areas.

The prime minister rejected the proposal, saying that Israel will not start a second stage before the first is implemented, just as stipulated in the declaration of principles between Israel and the PLO. While it is true that the proposal to move on to the second stage of the negotiations was conveyed on behalf of the Palestinians, this nevertheless points to U.S. concern regarding the present foot-dragging and difficulties in the negotiations.

The United States itself has rejected a PLO proposal to get more involved in the negotiations, claiming the sides themselves must overcome difficulties, just as they did in Oslo. This does not, however, prevent it from raising new proposals for overcoming the obstacles. Earlier, the United States examined whether the sides would agree on signing an interim agreement relating to those clauses of the first stage on which agreement has already been achieved. This is to give the appearance of progress in the negotiations.

The second proposal was meant to determine whether Israel would agree to start negotiations on the implementation of the second stage of the agreement, despite the fact that no agreement has been achieved on the first stage. The declaration of principles stipulates that immediately after the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area, the Palestinian side will start establishing a police force on which the sides will agree. The Israeli side will also start transferring military government and Civil Administration powers to the Palestinian side. The two sides are to determine the structure and authority of the Palestinian council. At the same time the IDF will start redeploying its forces in the West Bank with the intention of removing its forces from populated areas. Prime Minister Rabin rejected this proposal out of hand.

Israeli sources are concerned that the Palestinians want to leave issues relating to the first stage intentionally vague and quickly move to the implementation of the next stages, even before they prove they can adhere to the declaration of principles and control the situation on the ground.

Rabin has directed the Israeli delegation to the negotiations with the Palestinians to insist that the Oslo agreement must not be implemented before an agreement is achieved on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area.

Peres Comments on Talks, Syrian Track

TA2412121193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Gid'on Remez—live]

[Excerpts] [Remez] Good afternoon, Foreign Minister Peres.

[Peres] Good afternoon.

[Remez] Well, will there be a meeting?

[Peres] What meeting?

[Remez] Well, we are definitely talking about your meeting with Abu-al-'Ala' [Ahmad Quray'] at the supreme liaison committee, but perhaps you will also meet with 'Arafat in Cairo?

[Peres] The Liaison Committee will definitely convene; however, there are no plans for any meeting with 'Arafat.

[Remez] Do you share Abu-al-'Ala''s optimism as to....

[Peres, interrupting] I did not hear what he said.

[Remez] He said that the positions of the two parties had drawn closer during the Versailles talks and that the agreement would be implemented soon.

[Peres] Look, I can say the following: We will adhere to every single word that we uttered or even hinted at in Oslo or in the agreement. Moreover, some of the Palestinians have received the impression that we are belittling them or disparaging their dignity or status. That is not true. We have no intention of insulting anyone, whether Arab, non-Arab, or anyone else. The main thing we are insisting on which has real significance are our security needs. Therefore, I would say that we will do everything to make things easier for the other side while simultaneously doing everything possible to guarantee our security. Some progress was made but a great deal of work still lies ahead. I do not want to exaggerate in any direction. With these kind of things one has to see things through to their conclusion. While still in flux the situation changes rapidly from better to worse and vice versa. Therefore, one must be patient and wait until the issue is wrapped up.

[Remez] You talk about making things easier for the Palestinians by not denigrating their positions. Would it be wise right now to get into confrontations over symbolic issues like flying the PLO flag?

[Peres] That is not the question now. The major question now... [pauses] Look, things are not always done with bad intentions; for example, the issue of the border crossings and body searches for women, soldiers turning out their socks and shoes, and so forth. If there is some way to make this unnecessary—for example, by using electronic or mechanical means—then we have no desire to carry out such actions. The battle is not over flags but over content. Both sides must understand one thing: We did not propose the establishment of a Palestinian state, we proposed self-government, autonomy. Therefore, they cannot receive all the characteristics of a state. The difference between a state and autonomy lies in two main points: One of these issues is responsibility for external security over which Israel will retain sole responsibility. The second matter is foreign relations.

[Remez] Foreign relations appears to be the hardest barrier to overcome, because while one can compromise about the size of the Jericho area, the question of whether or not the Palestinians control the border crossings seems to be a simple matter of yes or no.

[Peres] No, no one is even talking about this. We are talking about coordination, not control. There is no need to use unsuitable words. The term coordination [last word in English] definitely appears in the document of principles and we will adhere to this. [passage omitted]

[Remez] While the negotiations with the Palestinians seem to have run aground or at least encountered difficulties, our American partners—and I have heard the same kind of talk from the Russians—are saying that it is time to promote the Syrian negotiating track in order to guarantee a regional arrangement. Do you also anticipate progress on the Syrian track following the meeting between Presidents Clinton and al-Asad, or perhaps even before that?

[Peres] I will be very glad if this is indeed the case, but until that happens I have no intention of engaging in speculation.

[Remez] Is Israel taking active steps to promote this or are we waiting for American or Syrian initiatives?

[Peres] The dates and the meetings have already been set. I do not see any need to take additional steps. President Clinton will meet al-Asad on 16 January and the heads of the Syrian and Israeli delegations will hold their first meeting on 17 January.

[Remez] However, unlike others, for example the American, you do not see a linkage between the two tracks.

[Peres] Whoever attempts to link the two tracks will give veto rights to the most radical and intransigent party. We want to reach an agreement with everyone but prefer to negotiate with each party on an individual basis. If you give one party the key to the whole negotiations process then there will be no talks.

[Remez] Because we are already dealing with dates, could you give us some kind of time frame, without precise dates, within which Israel hopes to resolve the differences with the PLO and begin implementing the Gaza-Jericho first plan?

[Peres] I can give you an idea of the tempo we seek to achieve, but no dates. The tempo will be very rapid. The date is not solely up to us.

[Remez] Then you cannot tell us what holiday to pin our hopes on in this regard?

[Peres] No. We will declare a holiday when this is over.

[Remez] Thank you, Foreign Minister Peres.

Comments on Syria, Talks With PLO

TA2012203593 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1930 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by political correspondent Gadi Sukenik at the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem on 24 December—recorded]

[Text] [Sukenik] In the midst of exhausting negotiations with the Palestinians, I would like to ask you if we are on the verge of a significant, perhaps historic, breakthrough with Syria.

[Peres] That is our hope, but I am not sure that is what will happen. We know the important dates in January. On 16 January there is the Clinton-al-Asad meeting. I think al-Asad will move somewhat closer to the American President and also slightly closer to us, and the next day the heads of delegation of both sides will start to hold talks.

[Sukenik] Al-Asad will tell Clinton what we want to hear, the substance of the peace, and then it will be up to you—you and Rabin—to utter what he expects to hear on the scope of the withdrawal.

[Peres] No, we cannot discuss the scope of the withdrawal without ascertaining the security issue, for there is peace and security. For us, both are vital. We are situated on the Golan Heights primarily for security reasons. We did not go up there to achieve peace, we went up first and foremost to assure security, and I must remain firm on both those things.

[Sukenik] If the security arrangements meet Israel's demands and al-Asad says next month or later that he is ready for total peace, including embassies and open borders, will Israel then be able to give up the Golan Heights?

[Peres] First, I will not start with concessions or declarations about concessions. I do not think that is how negotiations are conducted. I can only say this in general terms: We are interested in peace with Syria. Peace cannot be achieved unless there is total peace; this includes Syria. That is true. There is time to talk about concessions.

[Sukenik] Still, it has been said that the depth of the peace will determine the depth of the withdrawal. Is that formula acceptable to you, or would you, at this stage, be prepared to say what the depth of the withdrawal is and wait to see what the depth of the peace is?

[Peres] That formula must be upgraded: The depth of the withdrawal will match the depth of the peace and the extent of the security. I am certain that the prime minister also meant that.

[Sukenik] That might be appear to less pro-Israeli elements a withdrawal from our commitment.

[Peres] No, we have been presenting the following formula all the time: Full peace and reasonable security arrangements are what will determine the extent of the withdrawal. That is the truth, and I would not like to reduce the truth by reducing the formulation. I am prepared to say that I genuinely strive for full and genuine peace with Syria, and like you, I very much hope that something dramatic will occur, although it has not been assured, and is no more than a guess. In the negotiations we have to careful about making predictions.

[Sukenik] Mr. Foreign Minister, after many deliberations with the Palestinians, we have the impression that Yasir 'Arafat has recanted at least on some of the things included in the original Oslo agreement. Is he not simply rebutting the agreement he signed?

[Peres] It would be more correct to say that he is trying to extract extra things beyond the agreement. The agreement exists, nobody can change it. Let us reiterate matters so that everybody knows what is under consideration. There are four or five main issues. The first is responsibility for Israel's borders, or what is called external security. There is internal security and there is external security. For some reason, there is an impression among some Palestinians that there are two partners to external security. That is wrong. Only one side is responsible. That is the difference, at least one of the two differences, between autonomy and an independent state. On that, I think the debate has ended. It is clear that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is responsible for the security of the State of Israel under the existing borders during the autonomy or self-government period. I say during the interim period, since in the future there might be different borders. The IDF will then also remain responsible, but today the IDF has responsibility for the Jordan River on the one side, and the southern Gaza Strip on the other.

The second issue concerns border crossings at the bridges. The declaration of principles [DOP] says that there will be coordination. In fact, the Palestinians say: Dear friends, do not hurt our honor as we are the ones crossing the bridges anyway. The searches and our official absence makes it very hard on us. They say that they understand our position on security and that we should appreciate their problem with honor. That refers to coordination. We are searching for a solution that would also be agreeable to us.

The third issue we are discussing is Jericho. They want slightly more than provided for in the declaration of principles, and we cannot give them beyond what we said in the Knesset. We will stand by and act upon this decision . Will a solution by found? Possibly. Does it already exist? Not yet.

[Sukenik] Can we therefore assume that Yasir 'Arafat, Yitzhaq Rabin, and you must make decisions this weekend? Everything is clear now, everything was detailed in the deliberations; now is the time to make decisions.

[Peres] In my view, our side works as a team and there are no problems in reaching decisions.

[Sukenik] Does that mean that the other side does not have a totally unified team?

[Peres] The other side, as you know, has many arguments. I do not want to harm their honor. First, the other side does not have a government, a cabinet, or parliament. Everything is built on personal relations, and from their point of view they are in diaspora; in other words, we cannot compare the two sides as they are not equal. There is also a struggle over who does what, and we hear the reverberations. We do not intervene in their arguments. I know that we need patience. I very much believe that in 1994 we will be able to have a far-reaching arrangement with the Jordanians, just as we made a large and genuine psychological breakthrough in our relations with the Palestinians in 1993. All the criticism we hear now is unimportant. The fact is we are sitting with the Palestinians, we are negotiating. It is true that there are

difficulties, but it is preferable to have difficulties in negotiations than the danger of continuing war and confrontation.

Cabinet Discusses Jericho Size, Bridges Security

TA2612113593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] It was announced in today's cabinet session that Israel is prepared to double the size of the area it will evacuate in Jericho, but will not give the Palestinians access to the Jordan River and the Dead Sea area. The ministers were further told that Israeli settlements will not be included in the boundaries of the area to be handed over to the Palestinians in Jericho.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that it was also noted in the session that Israel insists on its demand to retain responsibility for upholding security on the Jordan River bridges.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that at this point Israel does not want to demand the abrogation of the Palestine National Covenant and is focusing only on the negotiations. Rabin described pronouncements made abroad that a multinational force would be responsible for the security of the settlers as nonsense. Asked whether there are limitations on the establishment of new Arab locations on state-owned land in the territories, the prime minister said the Arabs are talking about expanding existing locations and not about building new ones.

The Likud Knesset faction said that the prime minister's announcement that he will not demand the abrogation of the Palestine National Covenant at this point shows that the Israeli Government has fallen into the PLO's trap and is allowing it to violate a fundamental undertaking in the document of principles. Faction Chairman Moshe Qatzav told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that this additional achievement by Yasir 'Arafat shows that he is the only sane person amid the political frenzy gripping the Middle East.

Weighs Proposals on Border Crossings

TA2612201993 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Report by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen; followed by announcer-read report]

[Excerpts] [Rosen] A heavy air of pessimism hovered over today's cabinet meeting. Yitzhaq Rabin outlined his three no's: No to Jericho's sliding all the way to the Dead Sea; no to its spreading all the way to the Jordan River; and no to surrendering control over the borders. Rabin said: If we do not retain control over the borders and the entry permits, we will find ourselves surrounded by 1.5 million refugees.

Shim'on Peres tried to be more optimistic. He said that the cabinet is not a hospital; we should see the entire process, rather than take its temperature every morning. Outside the conference hall, Peres, however, admitted to having apprehensions. We over-cultivated 'Arafat, he said bitterly to one of the ministers. [passage omitted]

[Announcer] Meanwhile our correspondent has learned the details of the emerging proposal on the border crossings control. Israel will be in charge of inspecting arrivals' documents and identity. After that, an electronic inspection of the arrivals and their luggage will be carried out jointly by Israelis and Palestinians, with each side having the right to demand a body search, in addition to the other measures.

Sources Prepared To Compromise on Borders

TA2412074593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Senior sources in Jerusalem told our political correspondent last night that Israel was prepared to meet the Palestinians half way on their demand that Israeli forces at the border checkpoints maintain a low profile—on the condition that Israel retains the right to check all those crossing through the checkpoints. The sources added that if no progress is made at the Cairo talks next week, the whole future of the political process will be in danger. Foreign Minister Peres last night briefed Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin on the results of the Versailles talks.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal said that three weeks ago Faysal al-Husayni proposed that Israeli security personnel at the border checkpoints be stationed at a screen or one-way mirror but Prime Minister Rabin rejected the proposal.

Shahal said that the crisis in the negotiations with the Palestinians stems from the latter's desire to convince their public that it was impossible to get a better deal. In his assessment, an agreement will be reached next week.

No-Confidence Motions on Peace Process Defeated

TA2712114493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Excerpts] The government has defeated two no-confidence motions presented by opposition parties in the Knesset this morning. The vote was 54 against, 44 in favor, with two abstentions by members of the SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] party. Steve Linde reports that the debate was stormy.

[Begin Linde recording] The no-confidence motions were presented by the Likud, Tzomet, and the National Religious Party [NRP] over what they termed the security situation and the government's failure in the peace process. The motions sparked a shouting match in the plenum that reached a peak during an interchange between Foreign Minister Peres and Likud leader Netanyahu. The two pointed fingers at each other and exchanged harsh words.

Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss lost his temper several times, repeatedly calling for order. In presenting his no-confidence motion, Netanyahu proposed that a commission of inquiry be set up to investigate the Oslo agreement between Israel and the PLO. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Peres said he saw no reason for a commission. He said the government was giving the Palestinians exactly the same kind of autonomy arrangement that the Likud had once proposed. Yes, but now you brought in the PLO, a Likud member charged. Peres said: What are we giving up? We have no interest in being policemen in Gaza and Jericho.

The first no-confidence motion was presented by Zvulun Hammer of the NRP. [passage omitted] Hammer said in the last three weeks seven Israelis had been killed, and he called on the government to change its mind about permitting an armed Palestinian police force.

Peres responded: Should we leave rifles only with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]? The foreign minister said the best chance of ending the killings was a peace agreement with the PLO. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Senior Fatah Official Resigns, Assails PLO

TA2612154593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Two senior Fatah officials in the territories today tendered their resignations to the PLO leadership in Tunis. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that Sami Abu-Samahdanah, the director of the PLO's Gaza office, said his resignation was a protest against the failing management of PLO affairs by the Tunis leadership and the appointment of Dr. Zakariya al-Agha as the Gaza Strip Fatah commander.

Jamal al-Dik, the Fatah's northern Samaria commander, also announced his resignation a few days ago in protest over the slashing of Jibril al-Rajub's powers and the delegation of the latter's powers to PLO-Tunis official Abu-Mahir Ghunaym.

Our correspondent notes that two other Fatah leaders—Husayn al-Shaykh from Ramallah and Dr. Ahmad Ghunaym—are considering resigning over the disagreements between them and Faysal al-Husayni. Al-Husayni's complaints were behind the reduction of the powers of Jibril al-Rajub, the two men's commander.

More Fatah Officials Resign

TA2612211693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2100 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] There has been a wave of resignations of senior Fatah officials in the territories in protest over the appointment of Faysal al-Husayni and Dr. Zakariya al-Agha as heads of the Fatah supreme committees in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Three leading Gaza Fatah officials resigned tonight in the wake of Sami Abu-Samahdanah's resignation earlier today: Tawfiq Abu- Husa, Zakariya Talmas, and Ihab al-Ashqar. The chairmen of the Industrialists Association and the Workers Association, as well as the members of these two bodies' boards of directors have also announced their intention to resign rather than cooperate with Dr. Zakariya al-Agha.

In Judaea and Samaria, several Faysal al-Husayni's opponents are in hiding in fear of harm from al-Husayni's men.

In the wake of the resignation of Jamal al-Dik, Fatah activists from various cities said that they too are openly opposed to Faysal al-Husayni.

Hamas Offers Terms for Ending 'Terror' Attacks

Rabin Given 3 Days To Respond

TA2312171293 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1600 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has proposed ending terror attacks against the settlers if Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin disarms the settlers and orders the army to stop shooting Palestinian residents.

A leaflet disseminated in Gaza this evening by 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam, the Hamas military arm, states that Hamas is willing to reach such an agreement with Israel in order to prove to the entire world that Rabin, rather than Hamas, is the real terrorist. Hamas is giving Rabin three days to answer this proposal on television.

Hamas Leader Denies Knowledge of Ultimatum

TA2412073193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] One of the leading members of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] organization in the Gaza Strip, former deportee Dr. Mahmud al-Zahhar, says he knows nothing about the threat by Hamas to increase its attacks if Jewish settlers in the territories are not disarmed. The Hamas statement, made on a video cassette delivered to Israel television, also demanded that the hunt by the Israel Defense Forces for Hamas terrorists be stopped. The organization called on Prime Minister Rabin to appear on national television within three days to answer the ultimatum. Al-Zahhar told our reporter in the territories that he did not believe the statement was serious.

Baraq Rejects Cease-Fire Conditions

TA2412205893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Lieutenant General Ehud Baraq, the chief of staff, said the best way to fight attackers is to give immediate chase after them. Gen. Baraq believes the fast reaction by the soldiers involved in this morning's terrorist attack on the road bypassing Gaza prevented a much graver

incident. The chief of staff said that Lieutenant Colonel Me'ir Mintz, who was killed in the attack, had been responsible for the special units searching for wanted Arabs. Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in the Gaza Strip announced that a band belonging to the organization carried out the attack in reprisal for the killing of the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam leader in the Gaza Strip.

Deputy Defense Minister Mordekhay Gur said tonight that Hamas is succeeding in carrying out painful attacks, but is not in control in the territories. He said that Israel rejects the conditions presented by Hamas for a cease-fire and regards them as a provocation. Hamas leaders want to present themselves as negotiating with Israel, but we chose to negotiate with the PLO because it is the main force in the Palestinian street, Gur said.

[Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew at 1830 GMT on 24 December provides other reactions to the killing of Lt. Col. Mintz. "Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres expressed deep regret over the attack on IDF soldiers in Gaza. He said it is yet another reason leave Gaza. We have to free our sons from the role of Gaza's policeman, Peres said. Our Knesset reporter Hanan 'Azran reports that Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan said that the Gaza murder calls for an immediate halt to the talks with the PLO. Knesset Member [MK] Eytan said the attack is a continuation of PLO pressure on Israel's leftist government. Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu said that the government is losing control. Hamas is controlling terrorism, and the PLO bears the fruit of Hamas actions, he said. Our correspondent Naftali Ben-Simon reports that Mr. Netanyahu and some other Likud MK's this afternoon participated in a demonstration by Likud supporters against government policy at the entrance to Jerusalem.

IDF Colonel Killed in Gaza 'Terrorist' Ambush

TA2412121493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] lieutenant colonel was killed this morning and two soldiers were lightly wounded when terrorists opened fire on their car at an intersection on the Gaza bypass road. The family of the dead officer has been notified.

Our correspondents Karmela Menashe and Moti Amir report that the terrorists ambushed two IDF vehicles with automatic weapons. The soldiers returned fire and the terrorists fled. An Arab bystander was killed in the shooting. A Kalashnikov rifle was found at the scene.

Hamas Claims Responsibility

TA2412160593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Security forces continue searches in the area where Lieutenant Colonel Me'ir Mintz, 36, of Re'ut, was killed, and where a major and two soldiers sustained light wounds. The terrorists ambushed an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] jeep near the junction on the highway that bypasses Gaza, with automatic fire, wounding the officers and men. The major and the soldiers alighted and ran toward the terrorists who escaped, first on foot and then in a in a vehicle waiting near by. IDF and medical teams arrived at the scene and treated the casualties, but failed to save Lt. Col. Mintz' life.

Shortly afterward, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] members fired in the air in Gaza's al-Nasir Street, announcing that 'Izz-al- Din al-Qassam's Cell No. 12 was responsible for the attack as reprisal for the killing of 'Imad 'Aql, the group's leader in the Gaza Strip. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that graffiti painted in Rafah and Khan Yunus also said 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam was responsible for the attack.

IDF Expresses Sorrow Over UN Soldier's Death

TA2712071693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] A Norwegian soldier of UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] was killed and another Norwegian soldier was moderately wounded last night when they were hit by an artillery shell fired by an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] unit that was on a mission in the al-'Ayshiyah region in the eastern sector of southern Lebanon.

Our correspondent Shula Schmerling reports that an initial debriefing conducted by the IDF shows that an IDF unit detected movement by several suspicious figures and thought they were terrorists.

Major General Yitzhaq Mordekhay, commander of the Northern Command, has appointed an officer to look into the circumstances of the incident. The commander of the IDF's Liaison Units With Foreign Forces spoke early this morning with the UNIFIL and Norwegian battalion commanders and expressed his sorrow over the incident.

Al-Majali Receives Iranian Envoy, Habibi Message

JN2512174193 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] At the Prime Ministry this afternoon, Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali received Ahmed Beheshti Dastmalchian, the Iranian ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The ambassador conveyed a message to the prime minister from Dr. Hasan Habibi, the first vice president of the Islamic Republic of Iran. They also discussed relations between the two brotherly countries and the importance of enhancing them, as well as issues of common interest.

The Iranian ambassador told PETRA-JNA that the message congratulates the prime minister and the government for winning the confidence of the House of Representatives. The message also stresses the need to enhance bilateral relations in all fields.

The ambassador said: We are witnessing today relations marked by a spirit of brotherliness and friendship at the level of the two governments. He further expressed his belief that bilateral relations will further expand and develop under the supervision of His Majesty King Husayn and President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. He added that the two countries can cement their relations by exchanging official delegations, visits, and messages.

The ambassador added: I am honored to be the first ambassador of the Iranian Republic to Jordan, following the restoration of diplomatic relations. I will seek to enhance mutual confidence between the two governments and peoples.

Speaking about Arab-Iranian relations, the Iranian ambassador noted that there are now good relations between Iran and its Arab neighbors. These relations are constantly developing because the Iranian Government has placed this question on top of its priority list. He said the Arab side also desires the same thing, especially as both sides coordinate at international forums.

Syria's al-Shar' on al-Asad-Clinton Summit

JN2712130193 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' arrived in Amman today on a visit to Jordan, He will convey a message to His Majesty King Husayn from his brother His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad. [passage omitted] In a statement to our reporter and to journalists, Minister al- Shar' said:

[Begin al-Shar' recording] I am bringing a message to His Majesty King Husayn from his brother His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad. The message comes within the framework of the contacts and coordination between the leaders of the two sisterly countries. The message basically deals with the coordination and cooperation needed to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of the international legitimacy resolutions and the Madrid peace conference formula. In all cases, we believe that coordination and consultation among the Arab parties involved in the peace process will help everybody achieve this objective.

I will also hold talks at the Foreign Ministry with senior officials here in sisterly Jordan. [end recording]

Regarding the expected meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al- Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton next month, the Syrian foreign minister said:

[Begin al-Shar' recording] There is no doubt that the expected meeting between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton is very important, particularly regarding the peace process in accordance with the objectives and bases laid down in the Madrid conference. This meeting, of course, will not have repercussions only in Syria, but on the overall peace process and other people, particularly as we proceeded from a comprehensive peace process on all fronts in accordance with the Security Council resolutions. Consequently, we hope that this expected summit will give strong and practical momentum to render the peace process a success. [end recording]

Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, made a statement in which he welcomed Minister al-Shar' and highlighted the deep relations between the two sisterly countries. He said:

[Begin al-Hasan recording] First, I would like to welcome His Excellency Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' in his country and among his kinfolk. As his excellency said, this visit comes within the framework of the good and cordial relations between the two countries and the existing ceaseless coordination between His Majesty King Husayn and His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad. There is no doubt that such relations will give momentum to the peace process in accordance with the Jordanian and Arab constants based on international legitimacy and the Madrid conference as a point of reference. Thank you. [end recording]

PFLP's Habash Arrives on 'Private Visit' 25 Dec

JN2612115393 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Dec 93 p 25

[Text] Amman—Dr. George Habash, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], arrived in Amman yesterday. PFLP sources told AL-RA'Y that Dr. Habash's visit to Jordan is private.

Separate Palestinian, Jordanian Identities Urged at Talks

JN2612205593 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1945 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Interview with Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, information minister and minister of state for Prime Ministry affairs, by Tamara Shukri in Amman; date not given; from the "Viewpoint" program—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] [Tamara Shukri] There is talk now on the Palestinian-Jordanian relationship. I do not mean on the popular level but on the political level and in political circles. How do you view the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship and what form will its future framework take?

[Jawad al-'Anani] The Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is an integral part of the peace process provided each party maintains its own clear character and identity. Why? Because confusing the cards and the identities reminds us of certain demands that some Israelis were, and still are, making. They say, for example, that the Balfour Declaration granted to Israel both Jordan and the West Bank. The fact is that the late King 'Abdallah was able to sever this connection in the Balfour Declaration.

For instance, some say that Palestinians who resided in Palestine were a minority and that many Palestinians are living in Jordan and that it is more logical that Jordan be an alternative homeland. As we have finished with this stage and each party now has its own character and responsibilities toward the peace process, we should be moving on to another stage that shows our common interests. The Palestinians cannot now reach an agreement with the Israelis about economic or political issues without this having a direct impact on us here in Jordan. Therefore, Jordan has always stressed the need to have a proper framework for the relationship with the Palestinian side before any of us negotiates with the Israeli side.

We talk about economic issues, banks, and so many other issues. Our priority in Jordan is to organize these issues directly with the Palestinian side. This is in our interest and in theirs. Our agreement on these matters makes it easier for each of us to negotiate with the Israeli side while believing that there is a strong base of coordination for his negotiations.

It seems, however, that the framework one is talking about does not conform with reality because it is not only us who define the course of the negotiations: Israel has a role. It is not in Israel's interest to have a clear connection between Jordan and Palestine or to have Arab coordination on the level of all states. Moreover, the United States has its own objectives as an influential state in the region and a sponsor of the peace process.

Therefore, the Palestinian, whose land is occupied and whose economy is under domination, will begin negotiating. Negotiations face important questions. Israeli withdrawal from areas agreed on, in my mind, takes political priority. After this, he can say: I can now negotiate with Jordan as this suits my political agenda as a PLO member or as a Palestinian negotiator. We in Jordan believe that there is no contradiction between the two positions; we must proceed in the coordination. Some on the Palestinian side say: No, I want to obtain as much as I can from the Israelis and then we can coordinate at any time because we are in the same boat. It is a question of methods and not differences of opinion.

Jordan absolutely believes that the PLO and the Palestinian side should be in a stronger position—the strongest position possible. The Palestinian side should also be fully prepared to negotiate for its rights in Palestinian territory. Jordan is willing to offer help and assistance and anything that the Palestinian brothers may need, and perhaps more than that. In this way, we will make their cause a successful one, because their strength is a source of strength for us, and their weakness, God forbid, is bound to affect us.

IAF Council Statement Stresses Members' Unity

JN2412095693 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 24 Dec 93 p 3

[Text] The Shura Council of the Islamic Action Front [IAF] issued a statement yesterday:

The Shura Council of the IAF held its concluding session in an atmosphere of amiability and unity among the ranks, which characterize the IAF in this country. This session proves that all IAF general assembly members, the Shura Council members, and IAF executive desk members are unified and cohesive. It should be noted that what happened is nothing more than a difference in views on purely organizational issues and not on basic issues as sensationalized by the media. God willing, we will, however, prove to everyone that our unity is not a questionable issue among the ranks of our front. We are guided by Almighty God's saying: Thus have we made of you an ummah justly balanced, that you might be witnesses over the nations, and also guided by Almighty God's word: And hold fast, all together, by the rope which God stretches out for you, and be not divided among yourselves. [Koranic verses] We reaffirm to the people and to all the loving and just ones that we have enough love and brotherhood to resolve out any differences, God willing.

After crystallizing its founding stage, our front is entering the second stage; that is, the stage of interaction with the masses of our lofty people, with more determination and unity. We reaffirm that our front has its own specific traits that are hard to divide or fragment because our front's affiliation is genuinely Islamic and does not rise from special interests, politics, or specific stages. The unity of Islamic action is a religious necessity. We founded our front on this basis to entrench this reality and enhance its unique character. We were all concerned with safeguarding Islam's higher interest. May God grant us success in serving our great religion and the unity of our rank.

We take this opportunity to thank all the sons of our people who offer advice and who are concerned about our front, Islam, and the Muslims. God grants success.

Secretary General on Election Results

JN2712115693 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 27 Dec pp 1, 3

[By Mariam M. Shahin, JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—The Islamic Action Front (IAF), Jordan's most powerful political party, Sunday announced a new 120-member Majlis al-Shura, which acts as the party's consultative council, after elections which saw hardliners losing ground.

By Sunday evening 117 members in 19 of the 20 electoral districts had been chosen. The so-called doves within the IAF, the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, appeared to have won the vast majority of the seats. The elections of three IAF members in the al-'Aqabah District were not yet complete as the JORDAN TIMES went to print.

The new council includes a woman for the first time since the Brotherhood was founded in 1946. Nawal al-Fa'uri, 37, a school director, is from the moderate camp. Her nomination underlined the front's effort to put on a moderate face.

Known "hawks" within the IAF failed to win seats in the council, including Lower House of Parliament deputies and IAF members 'Abd-al-Mun'im Abu-Zant, Badr al-Riyati and Dhib 'Abdallah.

The failure of the three men to win seats despite the large number of votes they received from the electorate in Nov. 8 legislative elections marked yet another chapter in what appears to be a transformation of the political strategies that the IAF as a party and the Muslim Brotherhood as a social movement are pursuing.

At a press conference Sunday, IAF Secretary-General Ishaq al-Farhan rejected the notion that his party contained "doves" and "hawks," but said that IAF members are "dovish or hawkish on certain issues."

Younger and more revolutionary members of the Brotherhood are trying to influence the political body of their environment, severely curtailing the IAF's moves to streamline the administrative and bureaucratic structure of the party.

The younger members question what they consider the timid approach the IAF is taking towards basic Brotherhood teachings, in particular Jordan's acceptance of International Monetary Fund (IMF)-prescribed reforms, and the Kingdom's participation in the Arab- Israeli peace process.

Dr. al-Farhan said Sunday: "Ideology and pragmatism are sometimes not compatible." He stressed the IAF members "were only human and thus have human faults" but were not at odds with each other.

Last week's resignation of six members of the party's 17-member executive committee was "null and void," Dr. al-Farhan said. Except for the former Brotherhood spokesman and leading executive member Ziyad Abu-Ghanimah, none of those who had submitted their resignations boycotted the al-Shura elections.

Dr. al-Farhan told reporters Sunday that the group had contained the crisis, which he described as a result of internal differences "among the rainbow colours in our movement." "The crisis that the front faced in the last two weeks showed that the front and its members are not immune to differences, but we overcame the problems in a very short time," Dr. al-Farhan said. But the lineup of the new council, where an overwhelming majority of members are known moderates as opposed to its hawk-led predecessor, clearly indicated that the doves had prevailed. The front has nearly 3,000 registered members, and claims more than 100,000 hardcore supporters.

Much of Sunday's press conference which was also attended by deputies Hamzah Mansur, Muhammad 'Uwayday and Bassam 'Allush, was focused on the IAF crisis.

According to Dr. al-Farhan, Mr. Abu-Ghanimah's charges that the IAF was trying to liquidate the Muslim Brotherhood as a political and social force in Jordanian society and that the IAF itself was steering towards policies of accommodation with the existing non-Islamic orders in the country were "personally motivated and not politically sound."

"Mr. Abu-Ghanimah was upset that he was not nominated as an IAF candidate for Amman Second District in the legislative elections. He saw that he was losing ground and thus he resorted to going public with the IAF's internal issues and blew them out of proportion," Dr. al-Farhan said. Mr. Abu-Ghanimah, a longtime Brotherhood member on the IAF's executive committee, has argued that pro-establishment members were steering the political policies of the IAF towards "accommodation rather than constructive opposition."

Mr. Abu-Ghanimah's attempts to secure membership for some 300 like-minded Brotherhood members into the IAF one week before the Shura elections created an open rift last week, when Dr. al-Farhan adjourned an executive committee meeting after refusing to grant last-minute membership to the Abu-Ghanimah-backed activists.

Dr. al-Farhan said Sunday that IAF membership had been frozen since October but that as of January up to 900 new applications for membership would be reviewed. The Majlis al-Shura will elect a new executive council next week.

Al-Hirawi Receives Christopher's Message

NC2412153393 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi received a message from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. U.S. Ambassador Mark Hambley, who delivered the message, said it deals with the peace process. The ambassador stressed that his country supports UN Security Council Resolution 425. He said he expects progress in the Lebanese-Israeli negotiations in 1994. Hambley said the United States has always hoped for the solution of the problems in Lebanon.

Cabinet Restricts Satellite Transmission

NC2312215693 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Excerpts] The Cabinet has referred the crime of the bombing of the Phalangist headquarters to the Judicial Council. The Cabinet allotted 500 million Lebanese pounds to anyone who gives crucial information useful to the investigation. [passage omitted]

The president then briefed the Cabinet on the details of the discussions held during the Lebanese-Syrian Higher Council meetings. [passage omitted]

The Cabinet appointed the following people members of the Constitutional Council: Antoine Khayr, Salim al-'Azar, Pierre Ghannadi, Khalil Qabbani, and Adib 'Allam.

On a proposal by the president, the Cabinet discussed the amendment of the decree on satellite transmission. The Cabinet decided to restrict the satellite transmission to Tele-Liban [state-run television] pending the issuance of the law organizing the media. [passage omitted]

Attempt To Smuggle Heroin to Kiev Prevented

NC2412193393 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] This afternoon, customs officials at Beirut Airport foiled an attempt to smuggle 980 grams of heroin to Kiev. The smuggler, Jihad 'Abduh Murtada al-Husayni, a 23-year-old man from Ba'labakk, hid the drugs inside hollowed-out blocks of cheese. He was handed over to the Antinarcotics Bureau for investigation.

Israelis Kill UN Soldier, Wound Another in South

NC2712070193 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0627 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] A short time ago, REUTER cited a UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] spokesman saying that Israeli soldiers shot and killed a UN soldier and wounded another in southern Lebanon today. The spokesman did not explain the circumstances of the incident.

Israeli artillery fired about 20 shells at Bra'shit at 0600 today, killing Na'imah Shihab.

[In a related report on the killing of the UN soldier, Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic at 0635 GMT on 27 December adds the following: "UNIFIL spokesman Timor Goksel told REUTER a short time ago that the soldier killed by the Israelis in southern Lebanon today was Norwegian. A high-level Israeli security source told REUTER that Israeli soldiers spotted suspicious-looking people north of the border strip. The Israeli soldiers opened fire, killing one person and wounding another."]

Hizballah Leader Hints Israeli Soldier Alive

NC2712125593 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] A Hizballah leader has hinted that at least one Israeli soldier is alive among the soldiers held by the party. He reiterated the party's willingness to talk to those he called the friends, but not to any American or U.S. congressman, because—in his words—they are not qualified to mediate in a humanitarian issue.

Khaddam Receives Ex-Foreign Minister of Libya

JN2312141493 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] At 1000 today, Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Mr. 'Ali 'Abd-al-Salam al-Turayki, ex-foreign minister in the Libyan Jamahiriyah. They talked about Arab developments and bilateral ties.

Iranian Official Delivers Message to al-Shar'

JN2612215193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' this evening received Mohammad Kazim Khonsari, director general of the Iranian Foreign Ministry's Middle East and North Africa Department. Walid Rajab, head of the Foreign Ministry's Asia Department, and Hasan Akhtari, Iranian ambassador in Damascus also attended.

During the meeting, the foreign minister received a message from Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati. The message concerns bilateral ties and conditions in the region.

Egyptian Minister Queried on Joint Cooperation

NC1912084293 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Dr. Yusuf Butrus Ghali, Egyptian minister of state for international cooperation and member of the Higher Egyptian-Syrian Committee, in Damascus, by Shihatah Abu-al-Majd, in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue from Afar" program—recorded]

[Text] [Abu-al-Majd] Welcome to our program.

[Ghali] Thank you.

[Abu-al-Majd] Let us begin with the practical steps that you have achieved in terms of bolstering Egyptian-Syrian cooperation, particularly in the economic sphere?

[Ghali] These talks dealt with aspects that are deeper than those usually discussed. In particular, it dealt with the process of economic reform that is under way in both countries. Apart from common interests, the two countries are brought together by their plans to implement comprehensive economic programs. Egypt has made great strides in this regard over the last few years. Syria is just about to begin a similar course.

We have discussed economic reforms. I discussed this topic with my counterpart on the Syrian side; that is, the head of the Syrian delegation to the preparatory committee. We discussed the concept of economic reform and the thinking behind it. We found the Egyptian and Syrian concepts of economic reform to be in harmony.

The features of this concept are as follows: Successful economic reform should be based on liberalizing the national economy. Successful economic reform should be based on a strong role for the state in mobilizing resources through the use of market forces and the stimulation of private enterprise. Private enterprise has an essential role in economic development.

In my opinion, the talks produced a deep understanding between the two countries that will boost the traditional aspects of bilateral cooperation—such as trade and the exchange of expertise and investment—and encourage cooperation between the private sectors in both countries.

[Abu-al-Majd] Does this mean, Your Excellency, that these joint committees, particularly the Egyptian-Syrian one, can be a nucleus for fruitful Arab cooperation in the areas of trade and investment, boost investment in the Arab world, alleviate poverty and unemployment, and contribute to economic development?

[Ghali] Generally speaking, any communication among Arab countries helps to achieve the objectives you just mentioned. Any communication—whether it takes place in the form of a joint committee, a bilateral committee, a visit by a minister, a trip by a group of businessmen, even private citizens acting as emissaries from one government to another—helps boost economic ties among Arab countries. Of course, the more harmony there is among Arab countries, the easier this will be. The more economic and geographic harmony there—and, more importantly, harmony among economic policies and thinking—the better bilateral ties will be.

[Abu-al-Majd] This is my last question, Your Excellency. You met yesterday with President al-Asad in the framework of cooperation, coordination, and like-mindedness between Presidents Husni Mubarak and Hafiz al-Asad and their shared vision of the importance of joint Arab work and the consolidation of Arab efforts. What happened in this meeting with regard to consolidating Egyptian- Syrian cooperation?

[Ghali] Of course, President al-Asad, as you said, and President Mubarak are like-minded. Of course, his excellency President al-Asad reiterated these concepts. He stressed Syrian commitment to reforms. He emphasized the importance of joint efforts and bilateral relations and called for closer bilateral relations.

[Abu-al-Majd] Thank you, Your Excellency.

[Ghali] You are welcome.

Afghanistan

Hezb-e Eslami, Mas'ud Forces Agree to Cease-Fire

Firing To Cease 27 Dec

LD2612112593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami forces and the forces of Ahmad Shah Mas'ud have agreed on a cease-fire in the eastern and north eastern areas of Kabul.

According to a report by the Central News Unit from Kabul, Qazi Amin Waqad, the head of the Afghan prime minister's office announcing the news today, said: Firing between engaged forces will cease from 0800 tomorrow in Takab and Serubi areas.

He added that the cease-fire agreement, signed by the Afghan president and prime minister, stressed the ending of propaganda attacks, the maintenance of road safety and water and electricity installations in the Serubi area, and the demilitarization of the two areas of Serubi and Tagab. An 18-member committee, comprising Afghan cabinet members, political and jihad personalities, will be supervising the implementation of the agreement.

The forces of Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami and Ahmad Shah Mas'ud have been engaged in heavy fighting around Kabul during the past two months.

Cabinet To Implement Cease-Fire

LD2612195293 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1600 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Broadcast in progress]

[Text] ... A commission made up of the police forces of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the local mojahedin [words indistinct] the previous commission for pushing back forces and heavy weapons of both sides to fixed lines by the peace commission and the step by step implementation of the process of peace in the region;

The stationing of neutral jehadi forces in buffer zones in order to control the military forces of both sides until the normalization of the security situation in the region;

The maintenance of independent security of the power stations in Naghlu, Sarobi, and Mahipar by neutral jehadi units [passage indistinct];

The return of all local people including [words indistinct] to their homes. The removal of illegal [word indistinct] posts who cause disturbance to traffic and people along the road.

Also the cabinet, in order to implement the aforementioned decisions, commissioned the following commissions:

1. A supervision commission over the cease-fire and the assessment of damages in Tagab and Sarobi districts headed by esteemed Mawlawi Abdorrahim Azami, deputy minister in the Ministry of Justice—including esteemed Seyyed Hoseyn Anwari, Minister of Labor [as heard] and Social Affairs, esteemed Engineer Mohammad [word indistinct], deputy minister of [word indistinct] and esteemed [words indistinct].

2. A commission to control propaganda [words indistinct] including esteemed Hojat-ol-Eslam Mohammad Ali Jawed, minister of finance [name, title as heard]; esteemed Engineer Seyyed Mohammad Ayub, the minister of water and power, and esteemed Engineer Obaydollah Sirat.

In order to assist those who have suffered in the Tagab and Sarobi districts, an amount of 300 million Afghanis were allocated.

According to another report, esteemed Qazi Mohammad Amin Waqad, acting prime minister, at a press conference this afternoon spoke to local and foreign journalists concerning the terms of the cease-fire. The journalists put forward their questions which were answered by esteemed Waqad.

Cease-Fire Holds in Tagab

BK2712104693 Hong Kong AFP in English 1033 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Kabul, Dec 27 (AFP)—Rival Afghan groups stopped fighting in Tagab district Monday [27 December] after about two months of fierce clashes in which jets and heavy weapons were used, Afghan sources said here.

The cease-fire negotiated between the forces of President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar came into effect from 6:00 a.m. (0130 GMT) Monday, the sources said.

A spokesman of Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami confirming the report said the fighting had stopped.

"The cease-fire is holding until now," the Hezb spokesman Abdul Sabur said. Several previous accords between the heavily armed factions had collapsed.

Rabbani's troops, allied with forces loyal to Former Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, had been fighting Hekmatyar's men for the control of Tagab, 70 kilometers (42 miles) east of Kabul, for the past 55 days.

The agreement was brokered Sunday by a 17-member ministerial commission established under Communications Minister Qazi Amin Waqqad.

Waqqad, Hekmatyar's deputy, told reporters that the commission had called for a halt to a propaganda campaign against rivals. However, observers here said the state media, dominated by the ex-communists, continues to attack the prime minister.

Meanwhile a new front was opened in a northern Kabul district late Sunday involving Mas'ud's Shoora-e-Nazaar troops and the Shiite Hezb-i-Wahdat mojahedin.

Three people were killed and six wounded in Taimani area where former communist general Jaffer Naderi's militia was siding with Wahdat and another Shiite faction Harakat-e Eslami.

A Wahdat commander Ali Akbar said the clash erupted as Harakat fighters tried to set up a military post in Mas'ud's area.

His troops positioned at strategic hill started shelling the Shiite mojahedin, inflicting casualties and property losses.

However, a Harakat party general Khoudai Dad, claimed that the attack was launched by Mas'ud's men to secure release of four "thieves" captured by them two days ago while raiding a house in the Shiite area.

A defence ministry spokesman confirmed the clash saying that three Shiite parties jointly fought with the soldiers loyal to the government.

He said three soldiers were wounded in the hour long fighting.

Hekmatyar Forces 'Crushed' in Nusristan Province

LD2412183393 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Golboddin Hekmatyar's militia, which disrupted law and order in Nuristan Province, has been crushed during the clearing up operations of the Islamic army. A Bakhtar Information Agency military correspondent reported that units of the Islamic army in the province conducting a clearing up operation faced obstinate resistance from the disruptive group of Golboddin Hekmatyar's militia but defeated Golboddin Hekmatyar's militia. During this operation, three of Hekmatyar's group were killed and 12 others were taken prisoner.

According to another report, dissatisfaction with war increases daily in the ranks of Golboddin Hekmatyar's militia. Quoting security sources, a Bakhtar Information Agency military correspondent reported that 50 of Golboddin Hekmatyar's militia, realizing that fighting against the Islamic state is rebelion against Islam and the Muslim people, refused to fight and shed blood and lay down their arms and left the ranks of Hekmatyar's militia. According to another report, 200 youth from Laghman Province who were forced to enlist and were sent under duress to Charasiab have been deployed to a new security post by a commander of Hekmatyar's militia.

Hekmatyar's Militia Receives Aid From Azerbaijan

LD2512203093 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Golboddin Hekmatyar's militia receives money and ammunition in exchange for sending people to Azerbaijan. A Bakhtar Information Agency military correspondent reported that a plane carrying ammunition and dead bodies from Golboddin Hekmatyar's party's militia landed two days ago at the Jalalabad Airport under the guise of international aid. The airplane, whose landing has been reported by international news agencies, belongs to Azerbaijan. As part of a deal between Azerbaijan's intelligence and Golboddin Hekmatyar's militia, members of the militia are sent to Azerbaijan. Security sources said: The airplane was carrying ammunition and heavy and light weapons as well as bodies belonging to Golboddin Hekmatyar's militia. International news agencies had previously announced that Golboddin Hekmatyar has received $2 million.

Factions' Talks Condition for Return of Refugees

LD2412182793 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Talks between Tajik groups of different factions is a basic condition for the return of Tajik refugees to their country. Dr. Mohaydin Mahdi, Afghan deputy minister of planning, has signed an agreement on the return of Tajik refugees on behalf of Afghanistan with UNHCR and Tajikistan officials. He told a Bakhtar Agency correspondent: It has been noted in the tripartite agreement that the solution to the Tajik problem depends on talks between various factions. Afghanistan has no undertaking in this respect, and Tajiks should return voluntarily. Under the agreement, the Government of Tajikistan guarantees their security.

On the presence of CIS forces on the Afghan-Tajik border, he said: With the implementation of the agreement there will be no reasib for their presence. Foreign forces should be removed from the border. Our country certainly wishes to have good relations with Tajikistan, and recent agreements attest to this. [sentence indistinct] Tajedin Mardonov, Tajik assistant minister of foreign affairs, also believes that with the implementation of the agreement there will be no need for foreign forces along the border.

India

Finance Minister Singh Tenders Resignation 24 Dec

Prime Minister Receives Resignation

BK2412155293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] The finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has tendered his resignation from the union council of

ministers. The official spokesman said in New Delhi today that the prime minister has received the resignation and is seized of the matter.

Mixed Reaction to Resignation

BK2512033193 Delhi All Indie Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Major opposition parties have described the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh's, resignation as a right step, while trade and industry expressed concern over its likely impact on the economy. Senior Congress-I leaders felt that the step was unwarranted.

As reported, Dr. Manmohan Singh has tendered his resignation from the Union Council of Ministers. The official spokesman said in New Delhi yesterday that the prime minister has received the resignation and is seized of the matter. [sentence as heard]

Dr. Singh has said that it is up to the prime minister to take a decision on his resignation. He told newspersons that he has taken the decision following the submission of the JPC [Joint Parliamentary Committee] report [on securities scandal] and this was not a hasty move. Asked if his resignation will not scuttle the process of economic reforms, Dr. Manmohan Singh said nobody is indispensable. He said the prime minister is the architect of the economic reforms.

The AICCI [All India Congress Committee-I] general secretary, Mr. Naval Kishore Sharma, has described the step as unwarranted and said that the resignation should not be accepted.

The FICCI [Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry] president, Dr. Bansi Dhar, said the reported resignation of Dr. Manmohan Singh will give a jolt to the economic liberalization process in the country. The Federation of Indian Exporters Organization has urged the prime minister not to accept the resignation. Industrialist and president of the Asia-Pacific Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr. R. P. Goenka, said if the resignation is accepted, it will affect the economic reforms process. The All India Manufacturers Organization President, Mr. Vijay Kalantri, said Dr. Singh has made a sea change in the Indian economic scene. It would be a difficult task for the prime minister to replace him.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] general secretary, Mr. M. Venkaiya Naidy, while welcoming the resignation, has demanded that the other ministers indicted by the JPC report should follow suit. The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] general secretary, Mr. Harkishan Singh, Surjit, said that Dr. Singh has done the right thing by taking the moral responsibility. The CPI [Communist Party of India] general secretary, Mr. Inderjit Gupta, has said that it is clear from Dr. Singh's action that he has owned moral responsibility. The former prime minister and the Janata Dal leader, Dr. V.P. Singh, said that Dr. Manmohan Singh by resigning from the cabinet has shown the highest political integrity. The All India Forward Block leader, Mr. Chitta Basu, also welcomed the step taken by Dr. Singh.

Business circles in Singapore with trading and investment interests in India have reacted with anxiety at the news of Dr. Manmohan Singh tendering his resignation.

Further on Reaction

BK2512162293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] The resignation of the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has evoked a widespread reaction. The captains of Indian industry say his exit at this juncture will be a setback to the process of liberalization. They have urged the prime minister to turn down the resignation. The president of the International Chambers of Commerce, Mr. Hari Shankar Singhania, said Dr. Manmohan Singh is held in high esteem by the leaders of the international community and the acceptance of his resignation will shake the confidence of the international business community. Several Indian trade, industry, and export organizations have expressed similar sentiments and said Dr. Singh's presence in the cabinet is necessary to steer the country towards global recognition and competition.

Two Congress-I members of the JPC [Joint Parliamentary Committee] that probed the security scam have urged the prime minister not to accept the resignation. While Mr. Manishankar Iyer said that the JPC has not indicted Dr. Singh personally, Mr. C. Ballav Panigrahi described Dr. Singh as a man of rare ability and integrity.

The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] Politburo described the resignation as the right step and said it is incumbent for the prime minister to accept it forthwith. It also demanded the resignation of other ministers indicted by the JPC.

The Janata Dal welcomed the resignation. The party spokesman, Mr. Hari Kishore Singh, demanded a thorough probe into the working of the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] by a sitting judge of the Supreme Court. The DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] and the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha also expressed similar views.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Mr. Jaswant Singh, who was a member of the JPC, described Dr. Singh as a very able finance minister with his personal integrity above reproach and said his resignation has upheld the high traditions of accountability in public life.

The former finance minister, Dr. C. Subramaniam, has urged the prime minister not to accept the resignation as the country cannot afford Dr. Singh's exit at this juncture.

Party Chiefs Oppose Resignation

BK2712125293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] The Congress-I spokesman, Mr. Chandulal Chandrarkar, says there is a general feeling among party

leaders that the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, should not press for the acceptance of his resignation. Speaking to newsmen in New Delhi today, he described Dr. Manmohan Singh as a man of integrity and commitment. Asked whether some more ministers would resign as a follow up to the JPC [Joint Parliamentary Committee] report on securities scandal, the Congress-I spokesman said wait and watch.

Minister Urges Refusal of Resignation

BK2612125893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] The Orissa chief minister, Mr. Bijub Patnaik, has urged the prime minister not to accept the resignation of the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. He was speaking at a lawyers conference at Dhenkanal today.

The Congress-I leader, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, also said that in his opinion Dr. Singh should stay as he is committed to the process of economic reforms.

The Arunachal Pradesh Chamber of Commerce in a press release in Itanagar said that Dr. Singh's resignation at this juncture will have an adverse effect on the economic reforms.

The Assam Pradesh [State] Congress-I in a telegram to the prime minister has urged him not to accept the resignation of Dr. Singh.

The chairman of the Productivity Council, Mr. A.C. Josh, has also made a similar request to the prime minister.

Iran

Government Asserts Sovereignty Over Islands

LD2312185093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry has issued a statement in a response to a Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] statement in Riyadh. The statement says: The Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry welcomes individual positions of the member states of the GCC regarding the expansion of ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran and the elimination of misunderstandings between Iran and the United Arab Emirates [UAE] through bilateral talks. As for consolidating the stability and security of the region, the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry expresses its displeasure over the repeating of some unfounded claims by Abu Dhabi regarding the three Iranian islands of the Greater and Lesser Tumbs and Abu Musa.

Stressing its former positions regarding Iran's irrevocable sovereignty over the three islands of the Greater and Lesser Tumbs and Abu Musa, the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry, with regards to the need for the resolution of problems through direct talks, considers the reciprocal readiness of the UAE for bilateral and fruitful talks to remove misunderstandings over Abu Musa, as demonstrated by His Excellency [UAE President] Shaykh Zayid to the respected president of the Islamic Republic of Iran in a letter last year, to be a realistic move by that state and as such it welcomes the move.

The statement adds: In view of the importance it accords to maintaining the stability and indivisible security of the Persian Gulf region as well as the common responsibility of the littoral states, the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry hopes that the adroitness and wisdom of the leaders of those states and a deeper cooperation among the governments and the nations of this strategic region will pave the way for the enhancement of collective solidarity. Through eliminating ambiguities, more favorable conditions will follow to realize more solid bonds among the nations of the region.

Along the same line, the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry has stressed its earlier invitation to the UAE minister for foreign affairs—in response to Mr. Velayati's visit to the UAE this year—to continue talks without any preconditions.

Ministry Pledges Cooperation on Russian Hijacking

LD2112121293 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] A hijacked Russian helicopter carrying students as hostages took off from the northern Caucasus today. REUTER, citing ITAR-TASS in Moscow, reported that the next destination of the hijacked helicopter seems to be the city of (Novionomisk). Another helicopter carrying Russian officials, which intends to free the hostages, has taken off in pursuit of the helicopter.

A spokesman for our country's Foreign Ministry, expressing his deep concern today over the ugly and despicable act of kidnapping several innocent children in Russia, said: The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready for any cooperation with the Russian Government to save the lives of those children.

Some reports say that the helicopter is probably flying toward Iran.

SALAM Chief Editor Receives 1-Year Sentence

NC2512104393 Paris AFP in English 0945 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec 25 (AFP) - The chief editor of a radical Iranian newspaper, SALAM, has been sentenced to one year in prison and 40 lashes of the whip, the daily reported on Saturday, quoting the editor's wife.

An Islamic revolutionary court here on Wednesday ordered that 'Abbas 'Abdi, arrested on August 27, should definitely serve the jail term, but the flogging sentence was suspended. SALAM said the court did not explain

what the charges against him were. 'Abdi, a leader of radical students who stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in 1979 and held its staff hostage, was an outspoken critic of the Iranian Government's policies.

SALAM protested against the decision to try 'Abdi in a revolutionary court. The Islamic courts usually deal with cases of "anti-Islamic" or anti-government activities, corruption and drug-trafficking.

SALAM represents the views of leftist Islamic militants who assumed power following the 1979 Islamic revolution but were recently sidelined by their conservative rivals. Since it began publishing three years ago, the daily has criticised President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani's open-door economic policies and media censorship.

Musavi-Ardabili Delivers Friday Prayers Sermons

LD2412115693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Dec 93

[Text] Simultaneous with the auspicious birthday anniversary of the 9th imam of the Shiites of the world, His Holiness Imam Mohammad Taqi—peace be upon him—the magnificent rites of Friday prayers were staged today throughout the country. In Tehran, the masses of worshippers gathered in Tehran University campus, and staged the prayers led by Ayatollah Musavi-Ardebili.

In his first sermon, the acting Friday prayers leader of Tehran praised the presence of the people in the funeral ceremonies of the late source of emulation for the Shiites of the world, His Eminence Grand Ayatollah Golpaygani. He considered this overwhelming popular participation as an indication of the people's constant presence on the scenes; a presence that once again served to underline their profound bond with the clergy. He then set out to describe the special characteristics of the Grand Ayatollah Golpaygani and referred to the traditional procedure adopted in religious seminaries for selecting sources of emulation [marja'iyat]. He said: This procedure is the healthiest and the freest procedure that has ever been adopted anywhere in human societies. He added: It has been due to the alertness of the pure-minded scholars and the people that so far the colonialist camp has not been able to intervene in this procedure.

In his second sermon, Ayatollah Musavi-Ardebili greeted the birthday anniversary of Imam Mohammad Taqi, peace be upon him, and set out to provide an account of his fruitful life.

He concluded his remarks by stressing the importance of open-mindedness in all encounters and interactions and also in the formulation of plans and programs. He then considered the ability to accept criticism as one of the essential features that the officials in a society must possess.

President Urges Expanded Ties With Central Asia

LD2512143593 Tehran IRNA in English 1405 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Bandar-e Torkaman, Mazandaran Prov., Dec. 25, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani Saturday said that Iran is determined to expand ties with the Caucasian and Central Asian countries.

The countries in the Caucasus region and Central Asia fully trust Iran and have a friendly attitude towards it without being influenced by the divisive propaganda of global arrogance, the president added.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, here on an inspection tour of the province, made the remarks in his speech to a large gathering of people in this Caspian Sea port city.

Referring to the proximity between Turkmenistan and Mazandaran Province, Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that the ongoing cooperation between the two countries and interest of both nations in religious cooperation herald a bright and dynamic future for the region.

Tours Mazandaran Province

LD2312174393 Tehran IRNA in English 1524 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Text] Amol, Mazandaran Prov., Dec. 23, IRNA—President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani in continuation of his 5-day tour of the Mazandaran Province on Thursday visited the cities of Amol, Nur and Savadkuh and was warmly welcomed by the local officials and the people.

Addressing a huge gathering of people in Amol, the president said that full support of the Iranian people for the revolution and officials and their presence in all scenes proved to enemies of the Islamic revolution that their hostility with the Islamic Republic of Iran is nothing but total madness.

He further added foreign enemies and narrow-minded people through their poisonous propaganda are working to hinder implementation of infrastructural reconstruction and have concentrated their efforts on disappointing the Iranian public. However, the devotion of the nation and presence of people in all scenes thwart all such wicked efforts.

The president also inspected 'Hezar Sangar' diversionary dam in Amol and said infrastructural projects for making best use of water resources in agriculture are among the main plans of his administration for the province during the second five-year development plan (1994-8).

In another address to a huge crowd of people in Lafur, Savadkuh, the president stressed upon establishing factories suitable for local products such as wood industry. He also visited a yarn manufaturing factory in Lafur.

In a speech in the city of Nur, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani emphasized the role of women in the society and their equal participation in economic, scientific and cultural activities of the country.

The president arrived in the provincial capital, Sari, on Wednesday and is accompanied by several ministers, Majles deputies and officials.

Inaugurates Dam in Province

LD2612141193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani continued his tour of Mazandaran province on Sunday by visiting four towns and opening a dam.

In his visit to Babolsar he told a public meeting that the former Pahlavi regime had tried to spread moral corruption in this northern province but that the Islamic government will be turning the area into an active center of trade with the Caspian Sea littoral states.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani also visited the town of Fereydun-Kenar where he addressed the public and the workers involved in the construction of the local jetty.

Some 25 percent of the jetty, constructed with a 17 billion rials of capital, has been completed. The jetty will accommodate ships up to 4,000 metric tons.

In another public address in the town of Qa'em-Shahr, Hashemi-Rafsanjani told the public that there are those who, like the sinister owl, constantly speak of people's difficulties and low morale. They should come and see these glorious meetings and repent.

He added: Mazandaran cares for the revolution and guards the Islamic order. It is obvious that the future of the province will be definitely better than its past.

In his visit to Sari, Hashemi-Rafsanjani opened the Tajan dam, which is to provide water for 53,000 hectares of local farms. The 22 billion rial dam has a 264 meter crest and is 7.5 meter high.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani also visited a local agricultural project where he spoke on the advantages of joining farms in order to reduce cost and increase production.

Concludes Tour of Province

NC2712083093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] At the end of his five-day visit to Mazandaran Province, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said the people's extensive presence on the scene shows their love and affection for the imam's line and for the revolution, recalling the spectacular unity and uniformity of the people in the first days of the revolution.

The president, speaking in an interview with a Central News Unit correspondent in Sari, referred to important agricultural and industrial projects being implemented in Mazandaran Province and stated: Some 12 important projects to harness water throughout Mazandaran are being implemented. Once completed, 2.5 billion cubic meters of river water can be used for agriculture and to produce strategic goods. These dam projects are three times the number under way countrywide [as heard].

Describing as successful the plan to use large pieces of agricultural land for farming in Mazandaran Province, the president said: This plan plays an important role in reducing production expenditure and increasing production and we should introduce laws that will prevent land being divided up into small pieces.

Referring to Mazandaran's potential and to the need to tap the province's capabilities, the president said the Sadra Shipbuilding Complex is among its important industrial projects and uses the best possible technical and industrial know-how to build ships and oil platforms. The products of this complex play an important role in the use of Caspian Sea resources and in setting up installations in the sea.

He stated that expanding industrial towns in Mazandaran is one of the government's objectives and is necessary to achieve the better use of natural resources and agricultural products as well as for the production of animal and poultry feed.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani said the Babol chicken farm, with an output of 450 million chickens, is among the country's major and strategic projects. It has made our country one of the world's top six poultry producers.

Referring to the government's policy of setting up grain elevators in grain-yielding areas of the country, he said the inauguration of the 50,000-metric ton Kalaleh grain elevator and construction of the 50,000-metric ton Galikesh grain elevator are within the framework of this objective.

The president described the destruction of forests as a tragedy and highlighted the need to preserve this God-given asset. He also said that the plan to drive livestock out of the forests, the plan to set up a textile plant in Lafur, Sabatkuh, to open up new jobs, as well as setting up cooperatives for people living in forest areas are among the Construction Jihad's successful projects in preventing the destruction of forests and improving the living conditions of people in forest areas.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani referred to great developments in the use of the resources of the Caspian Sea as a strategic waterway for sea trade and transport between Iran and the four other Caspian Sea littoral countries. He said that extending customs facilities and equipping multipurpose commercial and fishing ports from Astara to Gomishan are among the government's plans and said that the natural position of Torkaman and Gaz ports in Gorgan Gulf favor development.

The president said that expanding Mazandaran Province roads in line with the province's economic development is necessary and added that plans to build a highway linking Nur with Tehran are being implemented and that feasibility studies for building another highway linking Chalus with Tehran have been completed and are ready for implementation.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that a project to prevent sea water from spilling over the country's northern coasts was immense and will be implemented along the entire northern coast—from Astara to Gomishan. He said it will create the possibility of coastal installations and will be a favorable area for investment by the private sector. He added that the project's trial phase will begin soon.

The president also said that the inauguration of the 60,000-number Mazandaran telephone exchange in Babol, which has expanded telecommunications and facilitated 30 telecommunications projects in Mazandaran, is among the important plans for the province's well-being and welfare.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaking at the end of his visit to Mazandaran Province, referred to government plans to expand airport construction and expressed the hope that next year, the expansion of the tarmac and other facilities will let pilgrims use the province's airport.

He also referred to railroad and train wagon repair, to expanding the northern railroad, and to plans to increase the railroad's passenger and cargo capacities.

He described Mazandaran Province's ability to breed various types of fish and plans to breed fish in Gomishan and the Anzali swamp as very useful projects for increasing the amphibious resources of the Caspian Sea and for meeting part of the country's protein needs.

The president also praised the efforts by the mechanical-technical forces of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps in implementing large development projects such as the Kowsar Dam in Gorgan.

At the end of this interview, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said the security and tranquility in Mazandaran Province are extremely favorable and described this as the outcome of coordination and agreement among the representatives of the supreme leader, managers, Mazandaran Province Majles deputies, and the Friday imams. He particularly praised the supreme leader's representatives in Mazandaran Province for this.

Speaker on Need To 'Confront' Cultural Onslaught

NC2712095393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] On the auspicious birthday of the first caliph and imam of the Shiites Imam 'Ali, peace be upon him, and on the second day of Book and Book Reading Week countrywide, the first cultural-artistic center of mosques was opened in the presence of Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri at the Imam 'Ali Ibn-Abu-Talib Mosque in the southernmost point of Tehran.

Our correspondent reports that during this ceremony, which was also attended by 'Ali Larijani, culture and Islamic guidance minister, Majles Speaker Nateq-Nuri delivered a speech in which he lauded the birthday of Imam 'Ali, peace be upon him, and praised the officials and employees of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance for setting up cultural-artistic centers in mosques, describing this as a new step toward establishing stronger links between the people, especially youths and adolescents, and mosques.

In his remarks, the Majles speaker referred to the defeat of the enemies of Islam and the revolution in the imposed war against the Islamic Republic of Iran and described the West's cultural onslaught as a new war against the noble Iranian nation. He pointed out: The world today is one of hegemonism and the sworn enemies of Islam are trying to find new ways to plot against the pure ideas of Islam; the least neglect in the fight against the cultural onslaught will inflict irreparable loss. Our people are present on the scene, as in the past, and will also confront the West's cultural onslaught.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Nateq-Nuri referred to the steadfast support shown by the Islamic ummah of Iran for the principles set out by the late imam and the esteemed leader of the Islamic revolution in confronting the cultural onslaught and highlighted the need to set up and to expand cultural-artistic centers in mosques as a practical step in this struggle.

Concluding, the Majles speaker stressed the need to pay serious attention to reading and raising interest, especially that of youths and adolescents, in study.

The cultural-artistic center of Imam 'Ali Ibn Abu-Talib Mosque, set up on the initiative of the Culture and Islamic Guidance Department of Tehran and in a bid to confront the cultural onslaught and elevate the alertness of the youths and adolescents, has various sections: Koranic and Islamic teaching classes, foreign languages, computers, sewing, embroidery, art, theater, calligraphy, and photography.

Prayers Leaders Support Araki as Source of Emulation

LD2512135893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1230 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] The seventh seminar of Friday prayers leaders of Tehran Province was convened in Qom's Hasanabad today. The seminar was attended by Hojjat ol-Eslam Rasuli-Mahallati, the head of the policy-making council of the Friday prayers leaders [as heard], Tehran Governor-General Taheri, and a group of the province's Friday prayers leaders.

In this seminar, the Friday prayers leaders once again expressed their readiness to implement guidelines issued by the eminent leader [Khamene'i] in connection with the need to confront the phenomena of cultural onslaught. Moreover, they stressed the necessity to wage a well-planned confrontation against this tool of colonialism.

Furthermore, in view of the opinion expressed the by the Vali-e Amr of Muslims [Guardian of the Cause of Muslims—Khamene'i] and by the Association of Qom's Seminary Instructors, the Friday prayers leaders of Tehran Province confirmed the position of the Grand Ayatollah Araki as the source of emulation following the demise of the Grand Ayatollah Golpaygani.

Ayatollah Comments on Araki's Qualifications

LD2512215393

[Editorial Report] Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian at 1530 GMT on 25 December carries a 15-minute interview with Ayatollah Javadi-Amoli on Grand Ayatollah Araki's qualifications to be the religious authority.

Ayatollah Javadi-Amoli was asked for his opinion in light of the statement made by the association of Qom seminary teachers announcing Grand Ayatollah Araki as the new source of emulation for Shiites. Javadi-Amoli firmly confirmed Grand Ayatollah Araki's suitability and confirmed that he possessed the following four "axiomatic qualifications" needed by a source of emulation:

1. Complete command over and total expertise in all areas of religious jurisprudence.

2. Independence of mind [varastegi].

3. A source and cause of fear and despair to enemies.

4. He Has one and only one fear: A fear of God.

At one point, Javadi-Amoli said: "We must accept as a Marja' [source of religious authority] the person who is feared by foreigners as a Marja'. We must accept as Marja' that person who is afraid of no one but God. For the time being, the person whom we know who meets these qualifications is Grand Ayatollah Araki. Either a person must himself be as brave as the late Imam Khomeyni and as willing to enter the battlefield or he must endorse the Imam's system [nezam]. If Grand Ayatollah Araki did not possess that unparalleled courage of the late Imam, he nevertheless recognized the Imam's value and worthiness. He endorsed and supported the Imam, and today he is endorses and supports the system and the leader [Khamene'i].

"With such a person, whenever there is any mention of the system, because he officially recognizes the system and because he has fully confirmed the Islamic credentials of the system and has been fully and knowledgeably involved in the revolution, he endorses the regime. He endorses it on the basis of knowledge."

Ayatollah Javadi-Amoli also says: "Grand Ayatollah Araki was a supporter of the revolution, was a supporter of the Imam, and is now a supporter of the leader and a supporter of this system. He possesses the first and second qualifications, that is, religious expertise and justice, to the highest degree and he is also someone whose position as a religious authority causes misery to the United States."

And in a concluding passage, he said: "The fact that enemies insist on casting doubt on the position of this great source of religious authority of the world of Shiism on such pretexts as age and various hollow pretexts is because they are afraid of his authority. In reality, they are afraid of the system and they are afraid of the continuation of the path of the Imam. I believe that the Marja'iyat [position as religious authority] of the world of Shiism, both inside and outside the country, rests today with Grand Ayatollah Araki."

Lecturer Urges GCC To Accept Republic's Membership

LD2312210093 Tehran IRIB Television Second Program Network in Persian 1620 GMT 23 Dec 93

[Studio political discussion with university politics lecturer Dr. Bigdeli and unidentified moderator—live or recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Moderator] The establishment of security and stability in the Persian Gulf was among the goals of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [PGCC]. However, there are some obstacles on the path of the achievement of these goals, the most important of which are due to unilateral and unrealistic policies by the member states. We devote the last part of the program to a study of the security issues of the region and ways of achieving real stability in he Persian Gulf region.

The Persian Gulf is a sensitive and strategic region where any instability and insecurity would have negative repercussions for all the countries of the region. This fact has led to the realization that collective security in the Persian Gulf is a tangible need. Nevertheless, divergent views among the countries of the region have so far rendered ineffective any effort for achieving a system of collective security.

The most important reasons for this failure should be sought in the unilateral and unrealistic stances of the PGCC member countries. By closing their eyes to certain facts such as the importance of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region, the PGCC member states have tried to achieve regional security mainly through reliance on alien powers. By possessing the longest shorelines on the Persian Gulf and sufficient control over the different sections of the international waterways of the Strait of Hormuz, Iran plays the most important role in safeguarding the security of the region.

With a realistic understanding of the issues of the region, Tehran has repeatedly announced that the creation of a collective security system can only be possible with the participation of all the regional countries, while any unilateralism [yeksunegari] in this connection could by itself lead to insecurity and instability in the region.

In a stance opposed to the above stance, the PGCC has always tried to pave the way for the presence of foreigners in the region and trying to safeguard its security by means of stationing mainly Western forces. Due to the fact that this effort is not based upon the realities of the region it has not and will not produce any results; because the experience of the presence of Western forces in different parts of the world has shown that this presence itself has intensified tension and, ultimately, will produce nothing but loss for the people of those regions.

In another unilateral stance after the Persian Gulf War, the PGCC tried to bring about security in the region with the help of Egypt and Syria in the context of a plan which came to be known as six-plus-two. The passage of many years after the inception of that plan, during which time not a single practical step was taken toward its implementation, demonstrates how unrealistic and theoretical that plan was.

Collective security is a clearly understood notion by international community, and the participation of all the regional countries in collective security is regarded as essential and necessary. Would the achievement of collective security not remain an unattainable goal if the PGCC member states insist on closing their eyes to this certain reality? In that case, would there be any guarantee that other events such as the Persian Gulf war could be prevented?

Dr. Bigdeli, you said that one of the main goals of the PGCC has been the safeguarding of the security in the region. However, we see that the PGCC has mainly failed to achieve this main goal. What do you believe is the reason for this failure?

[Bigdeli] As you know, to achieve security in the Persian Gulf region the PGCC needs to ensure that the most powerful country and, in my view, the country which has the longest shoreline in the north of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, namely the Islamic Republic of Iran, will definitely cooperate in this security.

The PGCC is a council which should consist of all the countries which exist in this region. Any council or any other collective entity that is formed to safeguard the security of this region should include all the countries of the region. The reason why they have not so far been able to achieve their security goals, a security which can ensure the export of oil, which can ensure the continuation of economic security, has definitely been their unwillingness to look for a formula which would admit Iran as a member of that Council, although Iran is willing [to join] and it has always shown interest.

In view of the two principles which I referred to before, namely the possession of long borders in the northern part of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman and Iran's military strength, this security will be established only when Iran has also been admitted to that organization; because we are looking for the same security which they are looking for so as to export oil, we are also interested in the same security which they are aiming at for establishing commercial contacts and cooperation in customs regulations and other issues which have a direct bearing on economic problems, leading to regional security.

During this five or six years after the end of the Iran-Iraq war and especially after the Persian Gulf war and the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq, Iran sincerely demonstrated that she can be a powerful partner for the achievement of that security. America with her military presence in this region incites tension, and our officials and experts who are working in these fields often point out that the presence of American forces in this region by itself creates insecurity. It is only the countries of the region which can cooperate in the establishment of security; in the same way that talks have already started by the countries of the region around the Caspian Sea, and it can be implemented. Definitely, all the Caspian Sea littoral states should participate [in the Caspian Sea security system], and we cannot exclude any of them.

[Moderator] Can I sum up your remarks as a general conclusion that without the participation of Iran as the biggest country among the Persian Gulf littoral states in the PGCC and due to the presence of foreign forces in the region which is contrary to the views of the PGCC member states and which is contrary to the initial aims of the Council on the basis of which the Council was formed, as well as due to the differences among the Arab countries themselves, such as between Saudi Arabia and Qatar or between Iraq and Kuwait, can I conclude that these are the reasons for the failure of the Council in achieving its goals?

[Bigdeli] Absolutely correct.

[Moderator] The last question, if you agree, what are your proposals for the success of the Council?

[Bigdeli] If the PGCC realizes the sincerity which Iran has already demonstrated, and if it accepts that Iran—a powerful Iran from a military and economic point of view—can be a good friend and neighbor for those countries, for the maintenance of security in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, for the export of oil and other economic relations, the only solution which could be successful is to accept [paziresh] Iran as a friendly and neighborly country and as a member in this family and this collective entity which exists in the Persian Gulf region; because, as I pointed out, Iran also is anxious to achieve that same security.

However, it is clear that before we reach such a stage of agreement between Iran and the PGCC, due to the presence of America and American forces in the region and her interference, it may be difficult for that outcome

to come about in the near future. However, fortunately, as the result of individual and separate contacts which have taken place with those countries, there are signs of the willingness to achieve greater understanding. Even in the final resolution of the recent summit meeting, as I have heard, in connection with Iran and the issue of the [disputed Gulf] islands they have realized that Iran has a positive stance and is willing to sit and solve these problems through direct talks between those countries. In other words, the issues of the region can only be solved through the correct stance of the countries of the region and without the interference of foreigners.

Tehran Radio Views Zhirinovskiy's Victory

NC2512101193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Commentary by the News Analysis and Commentaries Group]

[Text] Heads of the CIS, which consists of former Soviet republics, met in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan on Friday to again study issues of mutual interest.

Doubling the significance of the current CIS session is the unexpected victory of the ultranationalist Russian Zhirinovskiy and his party in the parliamentary election in Russia two weeks ago, causing great concern among the former Soviet republics and Russia's neighbors in the Baltic, Central Asia, and the Caucasus.

With his nationalist slogans, Zhirinovskiy supports the Russians and speaks about creating a new Russian empire; this can be extremely effective in provoking the sentiments of Russians living in the republics around Russia who are dissatisfied with their situation and who feel they are second class citizens. This will definitely have negative repercussions for the national security of the members of the former Soviet Union.

All these elements led to the CIS heads expressing support for Russian President Boris Yeltsin, whose policy is much more moderate than Zhirinovskiy's in the final communique that was issued on Friday, because it benefits the CIS heads if Yeltsin's position is strengthened against his nationalist opponents. These same countries prevented Yeltsin's proposal on granting special status to Russians living in the republics from being approved, since they considered this a prologue to further Russian infiltration in their political-social life and were concerned about the natives growing very dissatisfied; they are not very satisfied with the Russians.

According to one participant in the Ashgabat session, the CIS nations are concerned about nationalist and xenophobic feelings, religious disputes, and expansionist and warmongering sentiments. In addition to these political aspects, the summit's final communique highlighted the territorial integrity of the member countries and the nonuse of economic pressure for solving disputes among member countries.

The Ashgabat session was a brief one during which most of the members wanted to hold bilateral talks and solve their problems in this way, even though all of them admit the need to solve the problems among themselves through a collective stance.

Tehran Stance on Russian Election Results Viewed

NC2612122693 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES (INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY) in English 16 Dec 93 p 2

[Editorial: "Russia in Quest of Novel Identity"]

[Text] As yet Russia's final parliamentary poll results have not been declared, but preliminary results put the Liberal Democratic Party in the lead with 24.3 percent of the vote in Sunday's parliamentary poll.

The pro-Yeltsin Russia's Choice with 14.4 percent, the Communist Party with 11.2 percent, the Agrarian Party with 8.8 percent, and Women of Russia with 8.5 percent respectively hold second to fifth places.

Faced with these preliminary results which have inspired astonishment, the U.S. President Bill Clinton, striving hard to maintain his composure, declared that he was not surprised by the results. This is the natural outcome of Russia's battered economy.

Without a tinge of doubt, Russia's battered economy has affected the poll results. Of course, it must be borne in mind that in recent decades Russia has never had a thriving economy.

The promotion of fascist thought and propensity for a purely nationalist party, without a clear-cut economic and social plan, can elucidate that, apart from dissatisfaction with the economic situation, the Russians are also deeply grieved and chagrined by yet another issue.

They are annoyed by the excessive flexibility and even obedience shown by the Russian leaders toward the West in recent years in regard to domestic and even global events and issues. In actuality, the people of Russia have indicated that they are in quest of a new identity.

Meanwhile, news of the victory of the Pan Slavs and Russian nationalists with the ambitious objectives they have set cannot be pleasant for any country, specifically for Russia's neighbors.

On this basis, Iran keenly follows up the results of Russia's parliamentary elections, since it cannot remain indifferent toward the victory of a group opting for adventurism in the internationally-recognized borders.

Still another focal point of concern for Iran is how Moscow will, in the coming months, treat the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Any form of insecurity and adventurism in these republics will bear direct relationship with Iran's national security.

Khamene'i Allocates 10 Million Rials for Bosnians

LD2612141793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] On the occasion of 6 Dey [27 December], the birthday of His Holiness Amir al-Mo'menin Ali, peace be upon him, as well as the day of solidarity with the oppressed people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a sum of 10 million rials has been allocated by the guardian of the cause of the Muslims of the world, His Excellency Ayatollah Khamene'i, to assist the oppressed people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Vice President Signs Protocol on Cooperation With Turkey

NC2312202893 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Vice President Hasan Habibi has concluded his visit to Turkey and returned to Tehran. A protocol for trade and economic cooperation between Turkey and Iran was signed prior to his departure. Vice President Habibi, Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, Minister of Heavy Industries Mohammad Nezhad-Hoseynian, and Minister of State Cemil Erhun, who is the head of the Turkish group of the Turkey-Iran Joint Trade and Economic Committee, attended the signing of the protocol.

According to the new document, Turkey will buy $3 million or $4 million metric tons of oil from Iran in 1994 and the volume of the border trade between the two countries will be increased to $50 million. Meanwhile, the two countries will cooperate in the industrial and technological fields. They will cooperate on the manufacturing of vehicles, the construction of power distribution installations, and the development of highways to promote their trade relations with the republics in Central Asia. According to the protocol, Turkey and Iran will link their railways. The laying of the new tracks that will be required will be completed by 1996. Meanwhile, the two countries will cooperate on maritime trade and transportation.

Speaking before Hasan Habibi's departure, Prime Minister Tansu Ciller noted the two countries' wish to improve their relations. She said that Habibi's visit has further strengthened the friendly relations between Turkey and Iran. On his part, Habibi said that his talks have created a new opportunity for the improvement of relations between Turkey and Iran and expressed the hope that his visit will yield positive results in the near future.

Presidential Adviser Comments on Free Trade Zones

NC2612102493 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES (INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY) in English 16 Dec 93 pp 1, 14

[Report by Irfan Parviz]

[Text] Tehran—A top official from the Iranian Free Zone announced that all 'precautionary measures' have been taken for the safety of foreign capital to be invested in Qeshm and Kish islands and Chahbahar.

Talking to the TEHRAN TIMES, a senior advisor to President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on the Free Trade Zone, Morteza Alviri said the law in this direction 'allows that repatriation of capital and remittance of profits generated from economic activities in each area shall be free'.

Former leading parliamentarian Engineer Alviri said there were certain legal aspects which barred foreigners from investing in Iran.

He said, "All hurdles in the way of the smooth flow of foreign participation in Iranian economic and commercial activities have been eliminated."

"Earlier it was necessary for the investor to own a maximum 49 percent of the share in any business or commercial activity and the rest should have been owned by an Iranian national or nationals," Alviri said.

"Now all hurdles are cleared and foreign investors can be 100 percent owners of their business or economic concern," he said.

"In case there is dispute between Iranian authorities and foreign investors, the Islamic Republic accepts the verdict of the international court," the secretary of the High Council said.

Another salient incentive offered by Iranian authorities is the allowance of foreign banks' operation in the Free Trade Zone without any restrictions, Alviri said.

Alviri said a 15-year grace period for taxes is also allowed for foreign and Iranian investors in the zone and visa terms and conditions have been cased for travelers to the areas.

Alviri said that for the safety of foreign capital a guarantee can be given against Iranian property abroad.

"Yes, we are receiving a satisfactory response from foreign investors and things are going smoothly as far as commercial and economic activities are concerned in Qeshm, Kish and Chahbahar areas," Alviri said.

Oil Minister Supports Production Cut To Improve Prices

LD2512142793 Tehran IRNA in English 1414 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 25, IRNA—Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh says a four to five percent cut in oil production would be an "effective" step to improve oil prices in the market.

Speaking in an interview with HAMSHAHRI published today, the minister said the only way to raise the oil price would be to cut its output both by the OPEC and

non-OPEC producers. He criticized "irresponsible" non-OPEC producers for excessive production of crude oil and causing falling prices.

On his ministry's plans to meet home fuel shortage within the next two months, Aqazadeh said 40-42 million litres of kerosene and 62-64 million litres of gasoil [as received] would be distributed throughout the country daily.

He said a refinery in Bandar-e 'Abbas was under construction with a refining capacity of 232,000 barrels per day, which will be completed next year.

Oil Minister Says Reserves Reach 90.5 Billion Barrels

LD2612170693 Tehran IRNA in English 1640 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 26, IRNA—Iran's estimated oil deposits total 90.5 billion barrels of which one fifth have been saved through secondary replenishment method, Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i announced here Sunday.

Addressing the international congress on non-renewable energy sources at the University of Science and Technology, Aqazadeh stated that following the recent gas exploration in the Persian Gulf, Iran ranks second after Russia with an estimated 20 trillion cubic meters of natural gas deposits.

He added that Iran's refining capacity at present stands at one million barrels per day, up by 9.7 percent as compared to 1988. He was hopeful of a 6 percent growth in refining capacity during the second five-year development plan (to start March 1994).

Aqazadeh also briefed the congress on his ministry's strategy to replace oil consumption with natural gas and noted that gas consumption showed an average increase of 24 percent during the post revolutionary era.

The international non-renewable congress, which started today, is jointly sponsored by the Ministries of Energy, Mining and Metal and Higher Education, in collaboration with research and scientific institutes.

Several domestic and foreign experts and scientists are participating in the congress to end January 1.

Pakistan

Bhutto: Visit To PRC, DPRK To Strengthen Ties

BK2612145293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] The prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, arrives in Beijing tomorrow on a three-day official visit to China. After her visit to China, she will go to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In Beijing, the Pakistan prime minister is schedule to hold formal high-level talks with the Chinese premier, Mr. Li Peng, on bilateral and regional matters, including Kashmir.

Ms. Benazir Bhutto has said her tour to China and Democratic People's Republic of Korea would pave the way to further strengthening and cementing the brotherly relations with these countries. Talking to newsmen at the Prime Minister's Secretariat today, she said China is a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy. The main aim of her tour to China is to renew the life-long friendship between the two countries after the revival of democratic government in the country.

The prime minister said after the recent geopolitical changes and disintegration of the Soviet Union, China could play a moderating role in this area of the world. During her visit, she will hold talks with the Chinese leadership on a number of issues, including Kashmir. The issue of Kashmir, the prime minister said, has been projected by her government at all forums inside and outside the country. The present government, she said, has always demanded the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir. The Pakistan People's Party has always struggled for the protection of human rights. Therefore, it is the moral duty of the present government to project the issue of violation of human rights in held-Kashmir. It is in the interest of Pakistan as well as India for a peaceful solution of the Kashmir issue through dialogue and in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations.

The prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, will be accorded a warm welcome when she arrives in Beijing tomorrow. PTV [Pakistan Television] representative, Ziauddin Bhatt, reports from Beijing that exchange of high-level visits is a special feature of Pakistan-China cooperative relations. Ms. Benazir Bhutto's previous visit to China took place in February 1989. This was her first visit abroad after having been elected prime minister of the country. During that visit, Ms. Benazir Bhutto met all the top Chinese leaders and exchanged views on bilateral, regional and international issues. The architect of Pakistan-China friendship was the late prime minister, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. He undertook a number of visits to China as foreign minister and subsequently as president and prime minister. He laid the basis of a strong and durable friendship between the two countries. Beijing, capital of China and one of the most famous and historic cities of the world. Its archaeological sites like the Royal palace, the mausoleums of kings, memorials of the national heroes and Mao Zedong, besides the Great Hall of China and Tienanmen Square reflect the grandeur of its past and presence. China has helped Pakistan in the development of its economy and industry in a number of ways. The industrial complex in Taxila, the Larkana sugar mills, the Karakoram Highway, besides the ongoing projects like the Sandak [mine] project and the Chashma Nuclear Power Plant are some of the glorious examples of Pakistan-China cooperation.

Denies Possible Talks on Missiles

BK2612161793 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is leaving Islamabad tomorrow for official visits to China and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad today, she said the main goal of her visit to China is to further strengthen the longstanding friendship between the two countries. She said after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, China can play a moderating role in world affairs.

About her visit to DPRK, the prime minister said Pakistan enjoys good relations with DPRK, and under the current situation, it can play the role of a bridge between DPRK and other countries. She said the DPRK has acquired the low-cost housing technology on which talks will be held during her visit as her government wants to construct houses for low income groups.

She denied the reports in the press and international media that she will be discussing acquisition or development of missile systems with the DPRK.

Answering a question, Benazir Bhutto said she will inform the Chinese leaders about the Kashmir issue. In fact, this issue is always on the priority list of her agenda during talks with world leaders. She added that her government believes in the human rights and self-determination of the struggling people of Kashmir who are very dear to Pakistan. She will continue to work for the Kashmiri people's cause until this issue is settled. She said it is in the interest of both Pakistan and India that the Kashmir issue is settled in accordance with the UN resolutions. Benazir Bhutto said without the settlement of the Kashmir issue, the situation cannot improve in the South Asian subcontinent.

Answering another question, the prime minister said she is surprised at the reports about the Israeli diplomats claim that they are in touch with Pakistan to establish diplomatic relations. She said she has ordered an inquiry into this situation. Benazir Bhutto said Pakistan will not recognize Israel until all the Islamic states, including the PLO, reach an unanimous decision in this regard. Pakistan considers Yasir 'Arafat as the sole and true leader of the Palestinians, and it will fully support him.

Departs for China

BK2712040493 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] The prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, left Islamabad a short while ago on a five-day official visit to China and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea [DPRK]. The prime minister will be extended and extremely dignified welcome upon her arrival in Beijing for the first leg of her visit. She will exchange views with Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng and other Chinese leaders on bilateral, regional, and international affairs, including Kashmir. It is expected that the talks especially will consider increasing cooperation between the two countries in the fields of trade, science, technology, defense, and defense production. The prime minister's visit will enable the leaders of the two countries to establish close personal relations with each other and to expedite the efforts to enhance friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

Radio Pakistan's diplomatic representative says the friendship between Pakistan and China has been flourishing for more than four decades and has withstood every trial. Changes at internal, regional, and international levels could not influence this friendship and the two countries have identical views on all vital regional and international issues. Friendship with China is of paramount importance in Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan-China friendship is based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence and it has a significant place for peace and stability in South Asian region, which has helped in achieving global stability as well.

After her visit to China, the prime minister will make a two-day visit to the DPRK from Wednesday [29 December] onwards at the invitation of President Kim Il-song. She will exchange views with DPRK leaders on international and regional issues as well as matters of mutual interest. Both countries have identical views on important international and regional issues. Radio Pakistan's representative says the prime minister's visit will further strengthen the friendly and cooperative relations between the two countries.

Addressing a news conference in Islamabad yesterday, the prime minister said the main objective of her visit to China is to strengthen further the long-standing friendship between the two countries. After the break up of the Soviet Union, China can play a vital role for moderation and reconciliation in global affairs. On her visit to DPRK, she said Pakistan has very good relations with the DPRK. She said that she would apprise the Chinese leaders of the Kashmir issue and that this issue, in fact, has always been at the top of her agenda during her meeting with world leaders. She said her government believes in human rights and the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people, who are very dear to Pakistan.

Foreign Minister Views Visit

BK2712070093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0600 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said Pakistan and China will hold talks on increasing cooperation in various sectors, especially to promote trade between them, during Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's visit to China. In an interview with a Radio Pakistan representative in Islamabad today before his departure for Beijing with the prime minister, he said both the countries are reviewing cooperation in all sectors, including defense production. Expressing hope regarding his visit to Afghanistan on 4 January, the foreign minister said he would meet mojahedin leaders and would

try to create understanding among them in order to promote peace and stability in the fraternal country.

On the upcoming foreign secretary-level talks between Pakistan and India, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said all aspects of Kashmir issue will be discussed on the occasion. He said India is committing massive atrocities and gross human rights violations on the people of occupied Kashmir.

In reply to a question on relations with the United States, he said Pakistan and the U.S. Administration are looking for ways to overcome the current difficulties created by the Pressler Amendment. The U.S. Administration is making efforts to amend the legislation on foreign assistance and is reviewing all legal aspects to restore assistance.

Islamabad Radio on Li Peng's Remarks on Kashmir

BK2512031993 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 25 Dec 93

[Text] Chinese Premier Li Peng has expressed the hope that Pakistan and India will solve the Kashmir dispute through dialogue. In an interview with the ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN in Beijing, he said that the leaders of Pakistan and India have expressed willingness to maintain contacts, restart negotiations, eliminate tension and normalize relations, which are very positive steps, and China commends these statements. Answering a question whether he will hold talks with Ms. Benazir Bhutto on the situation in Kashmir during her forthcoming visit to China, Li Peng said he will exchange views with her on international affairs of mutual interest.

Commentary Previews Bhutto's Visit to China

BK2712053293 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 26 Dec 93

[Commentary by Mohammad Yamin]

[Text] Tomorrow, Ms. Benazir Bhutto leaves on an official visit to China. This will be her second visit to China as the prime minister of the country—her first one being during her previous tenure as Pakistan's head of the government. As is evident from what the Chinese premier, Li Peng, said the other day in a press interview, she would indeed be a welcome guest there. China and Pakistan have long enjoyed the warmest of relations. In the words of the Chinese prime minister, China-Pakistan friendship has stood the test of time and China-Pakistan relations have become a model of relations between states with different social systems.

The two countries have come to each other's assistance in times of war and peace. China's unqualified support for Pakistan during the 1965 and 1971 wars can never be forgotten by the Pakistani people. Also the Chinese collaboration with Pakistan in the economic and defense fields has been significant both quantitatively and qualitatively. Likewise, Pakistan has always extended sincere assistance to China whether it was the question of China's occupation of its rightful place in the United Nations and as a member of the UN Security Council, or of providing a window for the Chinese contacts with the outside world, or of maintaining its moral and diplomatic support for China at the time of Tiananmen incidents when the Western powers sought to isolate China.

There have been continuous exchanges of visits and (?delegations) between the leadership of the two countries and at official level with the result that friendly cooperation between China and Pakistan in various fields has expanded and strengthened yielding gratifying results. Latest in the series of bilateral visits have been that of Pakistan's defense minister to China and those of Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee and the Chinese Chief of the General Staff to Pakistan. All these have been successful and have culminated in the signing of bilateral agreements. However, in the current uncertain international situation and the addition of (?volatility) as a result of break up of the Soviet Union and the upheaval being witnessed in the former Soviet republics, it is essential that friendly relations and mutual cooperation between China and Pakistan should be further developed. This would not only serve the primary interest of the two nations, but also peace and stability in the region and thus contribute to global peace.

In this context, it might be observed that the extraordinary friendly relations between the two countries must be fully exploited for further expansion of economic cooperation and trade exchanges. As Pakistan, at this time, happens to be the largest economic and trade partner of China in South Asia, the quantum of trade flow and economic collaboration needs to be further increased. It has a vast potential and its prospects are bright. Fortunately, the Chinese leadership also recognizes the need for it and is willing to do everything to further promote the economic and trade relations with Pakistan. Pakistan has always relied heavily on China's support for its legitimate causes. Faced, as it currently is, with many specific problems such as those arising out of India's gross human rights violations in occupied Kashmir, the question of Nuclear Nonproliferation, and the United States' discriminatory actions against Pakistan under the infamous Pressler Law, Pakistan's dependence on the Chinese friend [as heard] has assumed a new dimension.

Although with the passage of time, the Chinese geopolitical perceptions may have undergone some changes, the Chinese are known for their firm steadfastness in their friendship. There is, therefore, absolutely no doubt that while restructuring its strategic priorities, China will not only retain the strong ties developed with Pakistan over the decades but work seriously to make them even stronger. Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto, who enjoys an excellent personal rapport with the Chinese

leadership, would during her visit to China emphasize the importance of the traditional Pak-China friendship that has assumed the character of constant factor in the international politics and also work toward the achievement of more substantive manifestations of it.

Bhutto Offers Troops for UN Protection Force

BK2712053593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Dec 93

[Text] The appeal of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] for a day of solidarity with the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina is being observed in Pakistan today, as in all the Islamic countries of the world. In a message on the occasion, Prime Minister Ms. Benazir Bhutto has said Pakistan will continue its solid and full support to the Bosnian people to enable Bosnia to face the current challenges confronting it. The prime minister said Pakistan is with the people of Bosnia in their struggle against foreign aggression and for an honorable and just settlement of the dispute. Pakistan is also ready to send its contingent to the UN protection force for Bosnia. She said Pakistan is sincerely distressed and worried by the tragic incidents in Bosnia and we view with the greatest respect the determination and courage, as well as the patience and firmness, displayed by the people of Bosnia despite extreme hardships and problems. Benazir Bhutto said Bosnia is a victim of foreign aggression where carnage and genocide is being committed, and the tragedy is that the international community has also failed in stopping these brutal acts, thereby vitiating the situation. She regretted that Bosnia-Herzegovina has not been exempted from the arms embargo by the United Nations. Thus Bosnia has been deprived of its right to defend itself. On this occasion, the prime minister asked the people of Pakistan to make generous contributions to the prime minister's fund for Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In a statement on the occasion of the solidarity day, ICO Secretary General Hamid al-Ghabid urged the UN Security Council to allow the use of force against Serbia in order to make it lift the siege of Bosnian cities and towns.

In Pakistan, special functions have been organized at federal and provincial levels in which speakers will highlight the pathetic plight of the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina and will express solidarity with them.

Air Force Reportedly To Dump F-16 Program

BK2412101393 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 24 Dec 93 pp 1, 4

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 23—Air Defence experts Wednesday [22 December] expressed reservations about the capabilities of the available choices of the fighter-bombers in place of F-16s programme, now reportedly dumped by PAF [PAKISTAN AIR FORCE] because of its being a 'dead deal.'

Top on the list of the choice available to PAF is Mirage-2000-5. Giving expert opinion on the French fighter-bomber, the experts argued the Mirage did not prove itself in the Gulf war. They said that despite being equipped with latest RDI radars the Mirages were assigned only 'backup' roles due to their limited manoevrability. During the Gulf war, the Mirages were kept on combat air petrol stations behind the wall of the American F-15s attempting virtually no air-to-ground missions. The French had deployed their latest Mirages in the Gulf war from 5th Escadre de Casse (Wing). The sources pointed out that the UAE also maintained their wing of 34 Mirage 2000 EAD in the Gulf war at the Al-Dhaffra air base.

The experts said that Mirage-2000-5 is not in fact as "as is" multi-role aircraft. Its avionics can either be optimised for air to-air role or for the air-to-ground role but not both at the some time. They said various Mirage models are actually reconfigured for different roles with all of the attending cost that go along with that concept. The experts pointed out that this contradiction has been consistent with all Mirage sales including Mirage-3 and Mirage-Vs sold to Pakistan in the past but which have been skilfully kept away from any public display.

Giving a latest example of comparison, an inside source in PAF said that recently a UAE air-to-ground optimised squadron of Mirages manned by competent pilots attempted to run formation of their Mirages amongst the American F-16s. These F-16s from the 363rd Tactical Fighter Wing were deployed on the UAE bases for round-the-clock vigilance. They said the F-16s consistently returned within one hour with over 95 per cent of the Wing fully operational at any one time. The UAE Mirage-2000 took on the average 3.5 hours to turn around and were maintained at 85 per cent operational level. PAF sources admitted that there were spares shortages, test-equipment shortages and long lead times in the French repair cycle which are totally beyond the control of user air force of these Mirages.

Giving the instance of UAE Air Force which also possesses Mirages, the experts said that UAE maintenance crew worked round the clock but the shortage kept the surge rates down. Historically, the sources said many customers say that the French have never supported their aircrafts while the Americans, Russians and the Chinese maintained their aircraft. The experts pointed out that to operate the Mirage-2000 on a realistic war-turn sortie generation schedule would cost more than three times as much as any equivalent F-16.

The sources alleged that the French rarely delivered the aircraft in the same configuration that was expected. Quoting an example, the source, said that the UAE waited for over three years to get from France the US weapon cross-servicing weapons attachments. Jordan's Mirage F-1s never arrived with their lead-computing sighting systems, and even the Indian Mirage-2000 programme took years to untangle. The aircraft are still lacking defensive electronics such as [word indistinct]

systems and radar warning equipments. The sources said that individual Mirage components such as the RDI radar, the Magic/Mica/R530 missiles, the air-to ground precision guided munitions, all have very admirable features and when taken alone can actually stand out amongst its American competitors. But when synergised into a comprehensive weapons system embedded into the Mirage 2000 much is left to be desired. The Mirage is a beautiful aircraft to fly but its grace undermines its total capacity to give the best bang-for-the-buck, the sources said.

While giving an objective analysis of the F-16s, the experts said that the American fighter bomber has operated continuously in combat conditions since 1980, carrying out thousands of combat missions, the shooting down over 65 enemy aircrafts of all types with not a single air-to-air loss. Even the F/A-18 cannot be put in that category because the first F/A-8 lost in the Gulf war was reported to have been downed by an Iraqi MiG-25 Foxbat with its AA-6 Acrid missile. The source disclosed that the only time an F-16 fell to another jet was in Pakistan and the attacker was another PAF F-16 which was over-aggressively manoevring for a kill. Four F-16s (all Americans) were downed in the Gulf war from anti-aircraft gun-fire and surface to air missiles.

The sources pointed out that during the Gulf war, the F-16s carried out over 10,000 combat sorties. They said that Israel has had no F-16 combat losses and over the years, it has flown over 10,000 combat sorties which include the long-range raid on the Iraqi nuclear installations in June 1981. Other F-16 user countries such as Venezuela and Indonesia have deployed their aircraft into combat situation with success. The sources disclosed that Pakistan F-16s have matched the Israel Air Force in F-16 combat sorties and experience, except for the unfortunate accidents when aircrafts were lost due to noncombat reasons.

About SU-27, the air experts said that this Russian aircraft which is under the active evaluation of PAF once again, cannot meet the requirements of Pakistan Air Force.

Though Russian aircraft is equipped with digital flight control systems, variable engine exhaust nozzles and advance strike systems but like the flamboyant French, it all looks good from outside but from a pilot's point of view, "They cannot get here from there". They said that the big Sukhoi SU-27s "Flanker" is three times the F-16 size. They said no SU-27s have been sold except to China which has the time and capacity to adapt to the Russian machines in a Russian style command and control system.

The source said that with long range—Beyond-Visual-Range (BVR) —missiles, weather/night, command and control influences, surface-to-air threats, along with other war-situations and the effectiveness of SU-27 becomes heavily influenced by the amount of supporting systems that go along with it. The sources said a single F-16 can generally handle two F-7s in a dog-fight. Four SU-27s have about the same effect as that of two F-16s have.

Giving the example of Russian air combat success, the sources said that since 1979 over 130 Russian built fighters have been downed by the Western aircraft, mostly F-16s, F-15s and F-4s. The sources said, though Russian air craft SU-27 is not very different from Mig-19 (F-6) that has been flown by the PAF pilots for over 30 years, it has never bothered the experienced PAF pilots because they were never in need of a heads-down situation for combat.

General Dynamics sources in Islamabad while reacting to the PAF decision to dump F-16 programme said that "we are still optimistic about the positive outcome of the efforts taking place both in Islamabad and Washington". They said the F-16s production has not suffered from Pressler embargo. Why not? New weapons have arrived along with spares and support. They said the concerned Americans in Clinton Administration have made all this possible while protecting the integrity of the laws that govern international relations including Pressler Amendment. They said, "should the difficulties with the Americans simply be replaced by another dead-end Mirage programme that offers limited technical incentives?" They said there are 21 brand new F-16s resting in the desert of US South-West with Pakistan markings on them, paid for, are just waiting to be delivered".

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